



Why the whole left must take the threat of the far right seriously >>Page 4

Standing up to the racist 'Football Lads'



Seventy years since the Palestinians were driven out of their land >>Pages 10&11

**WHY IT'S RIGHT TO OPPOSE ISRAEL**

# Socialist Worker

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## MARCH AND STRIKE



# BREAK THE TORIES



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### FRANCE

Workers show their power on the streets

A WEEK of big marches and strikes in France ended on Sunday in Paris with 160,000 people joining a protest.

It marked a year since Emmanuel Macron won the presidential election, a year which is ending amid continuing battles to block his assaults. The battle is far from over, but escalation is crucial.

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### MIGRATION



**Rage against state racism on Windrush march**

SOME 500 people marched in London on Saturday to demand justice for the Windrush Generation.

Around 300 people also marched in Birmingham and 200 in Coventry.

Labour's Diane Abbott spoke to the London march as it set off from Downing Street to the Home Office.

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### SCOTLAND

How the independence fight reignited

TENS OF thousands of supporters of Scottish independence marched through Glasgow on Saturday.

For many, independence is about fighting for a better society in the same way people in England and Wales are looking to Jeremy Corbyn.

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## THE THINGS THEY SAY

**'Think of the Black Death in the Middle Ages. It comes along and it causes disruption and then it goes dormant, and that's exactly what we are going to do'**

Ukip's general secretary Paul Oakley after his party is nearly wiped out in the local elections

**'Can I just be clear—as general secretary of Ukip—you've just compared your party to the Black Death?'**

BBC's Nick Robinson

**'Absolutely. What's wrong with that?'**

Paul 'plague' Oakley

**'I think that we are our own worst enemy... in the last election we had a 72 page manifesto, it just seems that nobody saw it'**

Ukip's Tony Blake



# Wait until 2071 to know why the cops killed teenagers

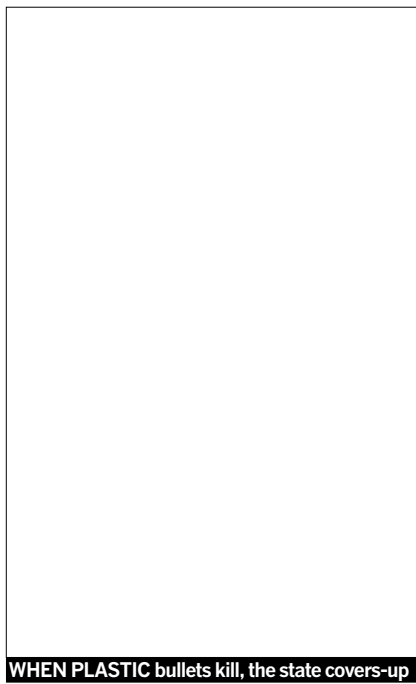
**FILES ON the killings of a 15 year old and an 11 year old with plastic bullets by police in Northern Ireland have been sealed until 2059 and 2071 by the government.**

The documents in the National Archives cover the deaths of Paul Whitters and Stephen McConomy.

One of the sealed files in the National Archives is described as, "File name CJ4/4402 Paul Whitters: killed by a plastic baton round, April 1981 (1981-83); closed for 75 years. Health & Safety, Personal Information when the applicant is a 3rd Party. Opening Date: 1st January 2059." The applicant in question was the government.

Paul was shot in the head by a plastic bullet fired by a Royal Ulster Constabulary officer on 15 April 1981. He survived ten days before dying from his injuries on 25 April. He was just fifteen years old.

A year later, almost to the day, a British soldier shot 11 year old Stephen McConomy from within an armoured vehicle.



Again he was shot with a plastic bullet. Stephen survived three days before dying on 19 April.

His file is closed until 2071.

Paul's mother Helen said, "To discover that the British government have a file on Paul which they have ordered closed until 2059 is shocking.

"What right does the government have to withhold information until those who knew and loved Paul are long dead. This is about the death of my son at the hands of a RUC constable.

"This file must be opened."

Sara Duddy, from the Pat Finucane Centre who discovered the existence of the documents, said, "These files contain information relating to the deaths of children on our streets, children killed through the actions of the RUC/ British army.

"For years families have campaigned for information relating to the use of plastic and rubber bullets.

"They are lethal weapons that killed 17 people during the conflict, mostly children."

**A TORY ex-mayor who was suspended from her party for making a racist 'Joke' has been reinstated—allowing the party to seize control of a local council.** Rosemary Carroll from Pendle, Lancashire, was welcomed back after having stood down for three months over a Facebook post in which she compared Asians to dogs.

Welcome home Racist Rose

**THE JUDGE leading the inquiry into cops who slept with activists has been branded "naive" for saying happily married officers are less likely to have had "extramarital affairs".** With attitudes such as these, we can be sure Judge Sir John Mitting will do right by the victims.

## Credit check to decide if cops should charge

DURHAM cops spent £46,000 credit-checking post codes before deciding whether to prosecute people accused of crime in those areas.

Experian's Mosaic consumer classification product was used for a police trial.

Mosaic claims to offer "a wealth of new and richly detailed information on all individuals in the UK and the neighbourhoods in which they reside".

This includes details of "demographics around household structure,



lifestyle and culture, property and tenure information, economic indicators".

Mosaic uses crude stereotypes, giving names to the

66 types most found in each postcode, from "Bungalow Haven" and "Bus-route Renters" to "Disconnected Youth".

This is then given to the Harm Assessment Risk Tool to decide whether offenders in police custody should be prosecuted.

Credit checks are part of an algorithm to decide if you are charged or not.

## School pays own trustee £240,000

A WEST London school has paid around £240,000 to a firm run by one of its trustees, teachers have discovered.

Freedom of Information requests unearthed invoices showing that Woodfield School, in Brent, paid the money to School Business Strategic Services (SBSS) between 2015 and January this year.

SBSS is owned and run by Greg and Colette Foley. During most of the time covered by the invoices, Greg Foley was



also a trustee at Woodfield School.

Brent NEU union has written to education minister Damian Hinds asking them to investigate possible financial irregularities.

**FREEDOM of Information** requests have also been hampering the Bright Tribe academy chain, founded by property spiv Michael Dwan. Board minutes show the trust paid £681,000 to Dwan's firms in 2016-17.

## Poshos drunk on 1968

FOR THE 50th anniversary of the Paris student and worker revolts, Tory magazine The Spectator reprinted a diary from Nancy Mitford.

She wrote from her house near Versailles, "I've got masses of champagne and no mineral water, so if the tap gives out we will be permanently drunk."

Mitford also noted that all the chemists had been looted. "I do hope our future rulers are not hypochondriacs."

## Courses for pigs, says posh Prince

THE University of Huddersfield has launched a new masters course in "security science" for Bahraini police officers.

The scheme was inaugurated by the university chancellor, Prince Andrew the Duke of York, just before the Formula One Grand Prix in Bahrain last month.

Ten lecturers from Huddersfield will make two-week visits to the Gulf state, teaching "the latest crime scene investigation techniques".

There are already 26 officers enrolled on the course but the university won't say how much it makes from the scheme.

## Unemployed told strip off

GOVERNMENT website Universal Jobmatch seems to have moved into providing labour for sex work.

It is offering jobs with Fantasy Cleans, marked "cleaners with a difference", and offers workers between £25 and £50 an hour.

A picture of a woman on the floor holding a brush and wearing lingerie and rubber gloves is featured. Clients, who pay up to £100 an hour, are told "Sit back while they do all the dirty work."

Successful job applicants are told that could mean being asked to dress up in "outfits of the clients' choice" which may be "fully clothed, in lingerie, or naked".

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# May and the Labour right defend the big bosses' EU

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

**EMBATTLED PRIME minister Theresa May's Brexit plans continue to unravel amid renewed Tory divisions and the European Union (EU) rulers' bullishness.**

From one flank she faces a revolt from some Tory MPs who oppose her proposals for a "customs partnership" with the EU after Brexit.

This would allow British bosses to sell products in Europe, but maintains tariffs on goods from the rest of the world.

Foreign secretary Boris Johnson has branded her plans "crazy". And the Tory-supporting Sun newspaper fantasised about defeating the "Europhile backbenchers" trying to "twist the prime minister's arm".

But pressure is mounting from other Tories and Labour right wingers who want to go further and remain in the European single market.

May faced defeats in the House of Lords with amendments on her approach to the single market debated as Socialist Worker went to press on Tuesday.

A Lords vote in favour of remaining in the customs union last month saw former Tory ministers opposing the government.

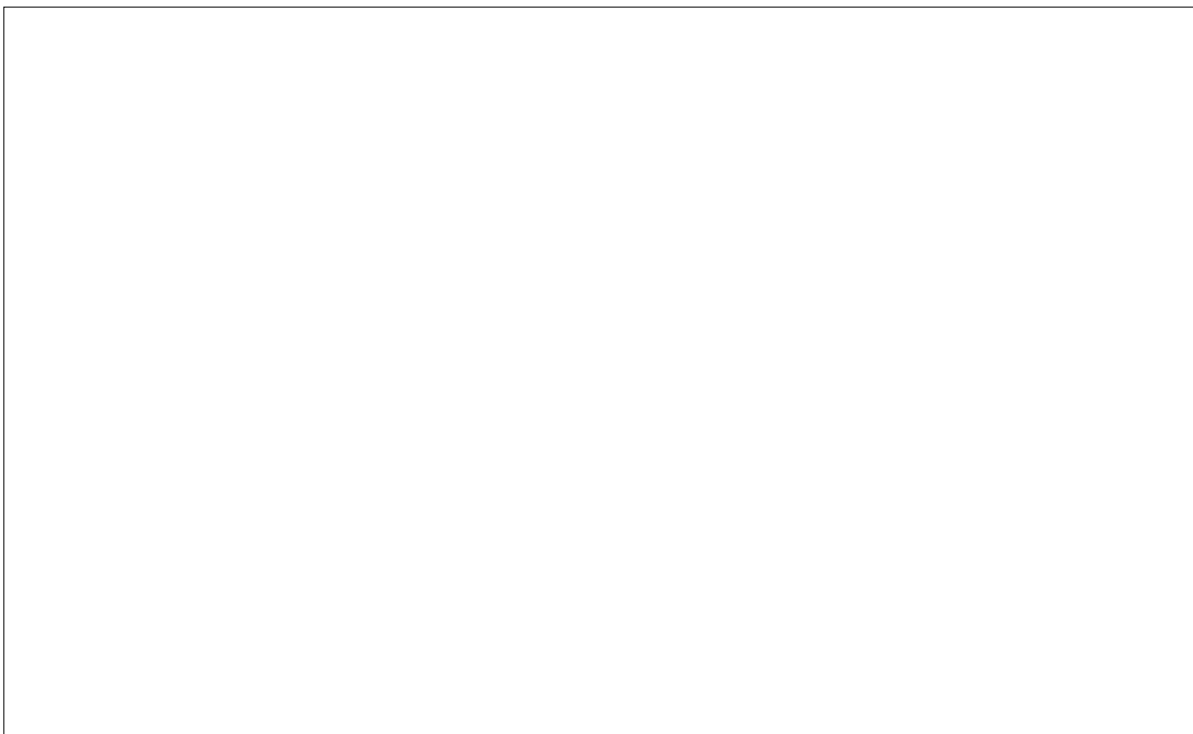
A fundamental contradiction lies behind these Tory divisions.

## Business

The Tories have tried to pull people's anger against the establishment in a right wing, racist direction by scapegoating migrants.

To win back Ukip voters May dressed up the Tories as the party of Brexit and promised to dump freedom of movement for EU migrants.

But the Tories' friends in the City of London and big business want to remain in the single market. They want as few barriers to their trade and profits as possible.



## THERESA MAY can't end the Tories' Brexit splits

Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn is also under pressure to back the single market from the right within his party.

Right wing MP Chuka Umunna claimed it would "go against Labour's progressive values" not to back the single market. This is nonsense—and would damage any future Labour government's ability to push through left wing reforms.

The single market's rules ban socialist policies such as wholesale nationalisation of industries or services.

The Sunday Times newspaper said that European officials want Britain to sign up to free market rules now to tie the hands of a potential Corbyn government.

Some left wingers and anti-racists wrongly argue that fighting against

the Tories' racist assault on migrants means staying in the single market.

But the likes of Umunna have argued that it's possible to restrict freedom of movement within the single market.

And the Windrush scandal has shown that the problem of racism is about more than migrants who have come from within EU.

We should use the Tories' divisions to fight for a socialist and anti-racist vision of Brexit.

That means rejecting the EU's single market—and fighting to defend and extend freedom of movement.

Friend of big business—Chuka Umunna

The Tories stuck together after their shattering blow at the general election. But May keeps running up against the EU rulers' refusal to budge.

EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier has branded the customs partnership plan as "magical thinking".

## Were Visas denied on bad tests?

EVIDENCE USED to reject over 35,000 visas has been slammed as "not a reliable indicator" of whether people cheated in English language tests.

The assessment was reached by the Bindmans law firm, which compiled a draft report on behalf of the National Union of Students.

The Home Office began a crackdown following a 2014 Panorama investigation which claimed people were using proxies to take the exams for them.

Theresa May was home secretary at the time.

The decision to revoke visas for over 35,000 people was based on evidence produced by Educational Testing Services.

The US firm carried out English tests that used voice

## The Home Office denied visas

recognition software to identify prospective students.

That voice recognition software has been shown to be faulty some 20 percent of the time, meaning at least 7,000 visas may have been revoked on inadequate evidence.

The Home Office's eagerness to act on evidence that wasn't checked is yet another example of the brutality of the "hostile environment" policy.

The Tories have long targeted people who come to Britain on student visas.

In May 2011 May said "too many" people "were here to work and not to study".

The attacks on people coming to Britain as students are part of the Tories' drive to get immigration figures down to 100,000.

Such drives mean crackdowns sweep up thousands into a bureaucratic nightmare.

The Tories are on the back foot as a result of the Windrush scandal.

Now the outrage people feel about the treatment of that specific group of migrants must be pushed out to include all migrants.

People should be allowed to come to Britain, whether it's to work, study or simply live.

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# It's time to build bigger opposition to fascists and racists

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

**THE DIFFERENT** forces of the British fascist and racist right rallied in Whitehall, central London, on Sunday.

Around 4,000 joined the “free speech” rally called by the one-time leader of the English Defence League (EDL) leader Tommy Robinson after he was banned from Twitter.

The Democratic Football Lads Alliance (DFLA), who brought the largest numbers, had marched to join the rally.

It was a magnet for every fascist in Britain—and should be a warning for the whole left.

There were hardcore Nazi elements, with “Infidel” T-shirts and EDL flags. A section attacked a counter-protest organised by Stand Up To Racism and Unite Against Fascism in Whitehall.

Many others waved British Union, Loyalist and English flags.

Robinson said, “The people of this country have been silenced for 20-30 years with the tag of racists. They have managed to silence people so that they are too scared to speak up when they see things that are wrong.”

Apart from Robinson, the biggest cheers were for Milo Yiannopoulos, who had flown in from the US to deliver a 20 minute sexist rant.

Robinson clearly sees an opportunity to regroup the forces of the far right after the EDL was reduced to a rump.

But, most dangerously, the rally brought together the fascists and Ukip. People in the crowd waved Ukip flags and members of their youth section, complete with party pin badges, were dotted through the crowd.

The DFLA, which increasingly works with

## BACK STORY

The march last Saturday was an attempt at healing a far right split

● Fascist ex-EDL leader Tommy Robinson is now effectively in the leadership of the DFLA

● They're a splinter group from the FLA

● But Robinson has appealed to the FLA for support

● He's been making links with the leadership of Ukip and members of the US alt-right

● Lots of Ukip members were on the demo



IT WAS like a presidential campaign rally for Tommy Robinson

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

## Hundreds march for Windrush as Tories vote to hide scandal facts

**SOME 500 people** marched in London to demand justice for the Windrush Generation on Saturday.

Around 300 people also marched in Birmingham and 200 in Coventry.

Labour's shadow home secretary Diane Abbott spoke to the crowd before the London march set off from Downing Street to the Home Office.

“I'm here to show my solidarity with the Windrush Generation and to say how pleased I am to see Amber Rudd's resignation,” she said.

“She didn't resign because she was sorry—she resigned because she had to.”

Speaker after speaker called for Theresa May—the architect of the racist “hostile environment” policy—to resign. Victims of the policy have been fired from jobs, had their benefits stopped and faced detention in immigration removal centres.

Lawyer Jackie Mackenzie is representing some of the people affected by the scandal. She



Marching in London PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

said that, despite the Tories' protestations, people are still facing brutal and bureaucratic treatment.

“It's not straightforward,” she said. “You still have to fill out forms and give your life stories. The system is fundamentally flawed.”

“We think hundreds of thousands of people could be affected.” This is the real

face of Theresa May's “hostile environment”—she must be forced out.

A motion in parliament that called on the government to release documents relating to the Windrush scandal was voted down last Wednesday.

Disgracefully, newly-appointed home secretary Sajid Javid voted against the motion, as did 305 other Tory MPs.

New revelations keep emerging that show the full impact of the “hostile environment”.

Windrush migrants may end up with “significantly lower” state pensions than other people.

This is because access to benefits is intentionally made difficult for migrants.

The march tapped into the mood of outrage at the treatment of a specific group of migrants.

Now that mood needs to be pushed outward to include all migrants and refugees. The Tories are hoping the anger will die down—it's vital it doesn't.

**Alistair Farrow**

## Family of Sheku Bayoh to take the police to court

**THE FAMILY** of Sheku Bayoh, a 31 year old man who died in Kirkcaldy, near Fife, minutes after being restrained by police, are suing Police Scotland for his unlawful killing.

Almost three years to the day after his death on 3 May 2015, family solicitor and civil liberties lawyer Aamer Anwar said the family had been left without answers.

He criticised Police Scotland, the Crown Office and the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner.

Sheku, a trainee gas engineer and father of two, died near his home.

A post-mortem identified 54 separate lacerations, cuts and bruises on his body.

His family says this suggests he died of positional asphyxia after being taken to the ground by four police officers.

Sheku's family, including his partner and his sister Kadi Johnson, are suing Police Scotland for £1.85 million, claiming the death could have been avoided.

It is said to be the first case of its kind



Sheku Bayoh

in Scotland and will reach the Court of Session by 18 May.

Kadi Johnson said, “We have kept an open mind and kept faith in the justice system, but waiting for three years with no answers has been soul destroying.”

Police Scotland chief in 2015, Sir Stephen House, met officers being probed over Bayou's death before they gave statements to independent investigators.

The Daily Record newspaper revealed that House spoke to officers within days of Bayoh dying even travelled to see one cop at her home. Police Scotland claim it was a “welfare visit”.

Anwar listed six allegations in the civil action.

They include that the manner of restraint used by the officers was “not reasonable, proportionate or necessary and resulted in Sheku suffering positional asphyxiation”.

He described how, within seconds of confronting him on the street, officers had sprayed him with CS gas and pepper spray.

They then forced him face down on to the ground and applied handcuffs and leg restraints.

Anwar said the civil action would be paused if any charges are brought over the death.



Shahbaz Ali

## Vicious attack on a refugee

**ANTI-RACISTS** in Edinburgh planned to protest on Thursday after a young Syrian refugee was stabbed in the city's Fountainbridge area last week.

Twenty five year old Shahbaz Ali is in a critical condition after being stabbed by a group of two men and two women.

Shahbaz had been trying to protect his young female cousin when he was attacked

at a hostel in Upper Gilmore street. His attackers shouted at him, “Why are you still here, why are you not back in your own country?” as they struck him.

Stand Up To Racism Edinburgh said, “We condemn this vicious racist attack and are calling a unity protest to say refugees and migrants are welcome here.”

“Edinburgh is a multicultural city with

different communities living side by side. “But people are too often being encouraged to turn on each other to explain deprivation and lack of resources.”

“This does not benefit anyone and lets those responsible of the hook. We have to fight for unity.”

**No to racist attacks** Thursday 10 May 5:30pm, corner of Home Street and Lauriston Place, Edinburgh

**Socialist Worker**  
WHAT WE THINK

## TORIES WON'T BE TOPPLED UNLESS WE PUSH HARDER

**C**RISIS AFTER crisis piles on top of Theresa May. For all the moaning of right wing Labour MPs, the Tories lost the local elections in England last week.

The Tories' racist immigration policies came back to bite them over the Windrush scandal.

When promises to get “tough” on migrants turned out to mean deportations and ruined lives, May's close ally Amber Rudd was forced to resign.

And then there's Brexit. Almost two years after the vote to leave the European Union forced David Cameron to resign, the Tories still haven't healed their deep divisions. But one lesson of last week's election is that the Tories won't collapse by themselves. They'll keep trundling along on a broken axle until we give them a push.

A proper fight—involving strikes—could prove to be one crisis too many for May. That's something to think about on the TUC's national demonstration in London this Saturday. Some recent examples show just a glimmer of what's possible.

The memory of the national strike by university workers earlier this year should still be

fresh in our minds. At a time when many union leaders have weekly accepted cuts to workers' pensions, UCU union members struck in defence of theirs.

After 14 days of strikes, bosses backed off—temporarily—from plans to force through a worse pension scheme.

Some 20,000 new people joined the union because of the strike, bringing the militant mood of the picket lines into union branches.

There was a whiff of that fighting spirit among Royal Mail workers last year. Mass gate meetings held by the CWU union showed how to organise.

So did the result of the CWU's strike ballot, which smashed

through the 50 percent turnout threshold and delivered a yes vote of nearly 90 percent.

That show of strength forced some major concessions from Royal Mail bosses. But the CWU could have won even more if it had called its members out on strike.

Even local disputes should give us some inspiration. In Newham, east London, recent strikes became a lightning rod for the fight against academies.

Academisation plans have been dropped at some schools, including at Avenue School this week after 19 days of strikes.

Each of these disputes had their setbacks and limitations—which just goes to show why we need action on a much larger scale.

The PCS civil service workers union could launch a national strike ballot over pay. That would be a step in the right direction. Other unions should do the same.

It's not good enough—as some union leaders have done—to tell members to accept pay deals below inflation as the best on offer. Strikes can win on pay and pensions—and help bring this government down.

After we march this Saturday, we need to step up the action.

Recent strikes gave a glimmer of what is possible, now we need more of them

## YOUNG NEED REAL CHANGE

**A**THINK-TANK called this week for a one-off payment of £10,000 to be paid to UK citizens when they turn 25 years old.

The Resolution Foundation's “intergenerational commission” looked at how to redistribute wealth to the generation born between 1981 and 2000.

In particular, they want these Millennials to be able to buy homes, to create an “asset-owning democracy”.

But the panel said payment

should come with restrictions, and can only be put towards housing, pensions, education or starting a business.

David Willetts, a former Tory minister who raised university tuition fees, sat on the panel.

He said that disparity between generations “lies at the heart of British society”.

But it is the Tory government which is driving through austerity and failing the young, old and everyone in between. It is

directly responsible for assaults

on education and for relentlessly attacking health and social care.

And it is the Tories who have gutted council house building and refuse to implement rent controls.

A one-off payment does little to challenge inequality.

Let's raise the minimum wage, abolish tuition fees, build council houses on a mass scale and fight for secure work.

And let's fund this by taxing the rich and the corporations, not by making older people pay more.

## HOW AUSTERITY AND RACISM FEED VIOLENCE

Weyman Bennett on knife crime and capitalism

Plus Rob Ferguson on the Labour Party and antisemitism

Wenda Clenaghan and Chris Harman on the events of 1968

Adrian Budd on the contradictions of China's state capitalism

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SOCIALIST REVIEW

## ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



# Don't dress Marxists up as liberals, Mason

**IT'S AN interesting sign of the troubles with which capitalism is struggling that the coverage of Karl Marx's bicentenary has been pretty respectful.**

So it's surprising, and disappointing, that the well-known left wing journalist Paul Mason should have written a really dreadful article in the New Statesman. It is centred on a photograph taken in Mexico City in 1937. In the foreground are the exiled Russian revolutionaries Leon Trotsky and his wife Natalia Sedova and the great painter Frida Kahlo, and, behind her, Trotsky's secretary Raya Dunayevskaya.

Mason's thesis is that the first three—Kahlo later became a Stalinist—all represented in different ways the dominant version of Marxism. This is summed up by Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin, for whom—Mason says—workers “needed the cattle prod of an elite, underground ‘vanguard party’ to make them move”. Even the best Marxists were “prepared to use manipulation and violence for the greater good”.

By contrast Dunayevskaya went on to discover Marx's early Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, where he set out “the concept of communism as ‘radical humanism’”. She later founded the current of Marxist Humanism in the US. What Mason himself means by “radical humanism” only becomes clear in his final sentences when he writes, “Fuck the vanguard party. The revolutionary subject is the self.”

I'll leave aside the many distortions and plain mistakes in Mason's article. He is right that in the Manuscripts Marx argues that the aim of communism is the self-realisation of the individual. He sticks to this ideal throughout his life. In one of the drafts of Capital, the Grundrisse (1857-8), Marx even tends to refer to communism as “free individuality”.

But this is no way counterposed, as Mason claims, to the study of “impersonal forces and structures”. He misrepresents Dunayevskaya, making her sound like another Russian emigre to the mid-20th century US, the ultra-individualist Ayn Rand who was an apologist for capitalism.

## Controversial

Dunayevskaya put forward a powerful interpretation of Marx's writings, stressing their continuities with the thought of the great German philosopher GWF Hegel. Her views are controversial because Marxists endlessly argue about Marx's precise relation to Hegel. But she was a tough-minded Marxist who attached particular importance to Capital.

In her path-breaking study *Marxism and Freedom* (1958) Dunayevskaya shows how the workers' struggles of the day and the US Civil War (1861-5) helped to shape the writing of Capital, Volume I. But she also stresses the importance of analysing the objective economic structures of capitalism that created the conditions for working-class self-activity. She says “Marx's discovery” was “that the objective movement itself produces the subjective force for its overthrow”.

Dunayevskaya also had a very different assessment of Lenin from Mason. She puts his writings in historical context and praises him for winning the Bolshevik party to fighting for the workers' councils (soviets) to take power in Russia in October 1917. “The party finally did become the ‘vanguard’, that is to say when they finally saw that without the spontaneity, the creative energies of millions, the ‘masses as reason’, which meant concretely their form of organisation to have power, the Marxist party would indeed be nothing but an elite,” she wrote.

I don't agree with everything Dunayevskaya wrote, but she deserves better than being appropriated to support what seems like a form of radical liberalism.

At its core Marx's thought is a doctrine of human freedom, of individual self-determination. But the road to realising this ideal lies through understanding the objective structures of capitalism and their contradictions. These can be undone through collective action—both the mass struggles of workers and the efforts of revolutionary parties.

Marx understood this perfectly well. This is why he spent so much time simultaneously studying capitalism in the British Museum and building the First International. And his greatest followers—not just Lenin and Trotsky but Rosa Luxemburg and Antonio Gramsci as well—followed the same path. Marx's bicentenary is a good moment to rededicate ourselves to this effort in our own small ways.

THE MARCH stretched for two miles through Glasgow (above). Catalan flags flew alongside the Saltire

# Tens of thousands march in Glasgow for independence

by RAYMIE KIERNAN

**TENS OF thousands of supporters of Scottish independence marched through Glasgow last Saturday.**

The organisers, All Under One Banner, said over 50,000 took part in the demonstration.

It was over two miles long, snaking through the city from west to east, as people of all ages travelled from all over Scotland to take part.

A sea of Saltire flags filled the streets, some with the stars of the European Union (EU), some with Yes2, while others combined with Catalonia flags.

Chants of “Tories out” rang out from a working class crowd, alongside demands for “independence now”.

Some had placards in solidarity with Windrush, against racism, Trump, the Tories and Trident. One simply proclaimed, “The union is dead.”

## Organisation

The march was about as grassroots as it gets. The organisation came from local Yes groups still active since the 2014 referendum.

Yet it was clear from the little flashes of yellow badges throughout that many marchers were

Scottish National Party (SNP) members.

“I'm only a member because I want independence,” said Jake, who had travelled from the town of Dalkeith, near Edinburgh.

He added, “It's a means to an end for me. I don't agree with a lot of the leadership's politics, to be honest.”

The turnout on the demonstration was over double that of last year, which itself was double the year before.

## The SNP's contortions

**REMARKABLY, the march had little official Scottish National Party (SNP) presence, although some of its MPs, MSPs and councillors were there.**

SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon gained a mandate for a second independence referendum at the 2016 Scottish parliament elections.

That second referendum would be demanded if there was a “material change in circumstances” to those in which Scotland had rejected independence in 2014.

Sturgeon argued that

**Brexit was that change in circumstances.**

Fourteen months ago she sought and won, with Green Party support, a majority vote in the Holyrood parliament to seek an agreement with the British state for another referendum.

But last summer Sturgeon shelved those plans and said she would come back in autumn 2018 with her view on a timetable for indyref2 once a deal on Brexit was clearer.

There is a movement growing in confidence, and it's becoming clearer that it needs to be independent of the strategy of the SNP leadership.

Pressure is building on the SNP leadership. There are signs that a drastic decline in membership and votes could easily be on the horizon if it does not follow through on the radical rhetoric of the last few years.

## Ballots

SNP membership reached a high water mark of 120,000 after the 2016 EU referendum. Now according to the number of ballots for its current deputy leader contest, it has 20,000 members fewer.

And in the 2017 snap general election, according to Ashcroft polling, 12 percent of those who voted SNP in 2015 backed Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party last June—that's around 170,000 votes.

For many, independence is about fighting for a better society in the same way people in England and beyond are looking to Corbyn. The lesson for both is not to wait for politicians to bring that change, but to forge united struggle to bring it about ourselves.



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Nicola Sturgeon

# Where now for Labour after local elections?

Results last week show waiting for the Tories to collapse is no option, says **Charlie Kimber**

**LOCAL ELECTIONS** in England last week saw Labour do well in some areas, but not make a decisive breakthrough.

Right wing Labour MPs and vast sections of the press used the results to attack left wing party leader Jeremy Corbyn. They dredged up the argument that Labour lost because it didn't appeal to right wing voters.

Jess Phillips MP said Labour didn't do enough to appeal to "white working class" voters—often a euphemism for pandering to anti-migrant racism.

And on Monday right wing grandee David Blunkett called on Labour MPs to group together to undermine Corbyn's leadership.

Yet Labour gained 77 seats while the Tories lost 33. In total, Labour won in 1,018 more seats than the Tories.

Labour took control of Plymouth from the Tories and is now the largest party in Trafford, Greater Manchester. This had been the Tories' outpost in the region.

In London Labour increased its number of seats in many councils.

In Hammersmith Labour won an extra nine seats. In Redbridge it did even better, gaining 13.

But Labour has not won any new councils in the capital. In Wandsworth, controlled by the Tories for 40 years, Labour gained seven seats, but that was not enough to take control.

## Privatisation

Labour did poorly in Barnet, in north London, where the Tory council has pushed through mass privatisation. Labour lost five seats, meaning the Tories now have overall control.

Barry Rawlings, leader of Barnet Labour, blamed the result on anti-semitism in Labour.

He was one of those who attacked Corbyn with accusations of antisemitism.

If it is true that some Jewish voters refused to vote Labour in Barnet it's because the Labour right

## BACK STORY

The elections were an opportunity to deliver a verdict on the Tories

● But Labour councils have been delivering Tory austerity for eight years

● Labour councils have also done deals with outsourcing firms and privateers

● Voting matters, but building the fight on the streets and in the workplaces is even more crucial

● Accusations of antisemitism have harmed Labour's vote in some areas

have worked with the Tory media relentlessly to peddle false allegations of antisemitism.

The Tories will be relieved to have not suffered major losses.

Reeling from the Windrush scandal, divided over Brexit and after eight years of austerity they nevertheless did better than many had expected.

They were helped by the collapse of Ukip. And Labour councils meekly implementing Tory cuts don't help Labour's claim to be different.

The results underline that there is no certainty that Labour will win the next general election. Simply waiting for the Tories to collapse is not a winning option.

And drawing back from struggle and radicalism risks allowing the Tories to cling on.

Labour's campaign didn't have the same insurgent feel as during the general election last year.

It's much harder to build a radical message around right wing cuts-making Labour councils.

The battles against austerity and racism in the streets and the workplaces are needed now more than ever.



**On other pages...**

Why it's right to oppose Israel  
>>Pages 10&11

**CORBYN HOPED** for a better result

## Expelled activist says antisemitism claims are a 'proxy war' on Corbyn

MARC WADSWORTH has hit out at his expulsion from the Labour Party in an exclusive interview with Socialist Worker.

He was falsely accused of antisemitism.

Marc said that the attacks from the right on Jeremy Corbyn "can be put right through mass action."

"There is a way forward," he argued. "The movement needs to rise up now and tell truth to power."

Marc was expelled from the party after June 2016 video footage was released of him accusing right wing MP Ruth Smeeth of working "hand in hand" with The Daily Telegraph newspaper.

Smeeth initially claimed Marc had used "traditional antisemitic slurs to attack me for being part of a 'media conspiracy'."

That claim was later taken down from her social media accounts. That's because it has no basis.

The video of Marc's criticism of Smeeth, used as evidence in his expulsion, has gone viral. Nowhere in the video does Marc say anything antisemitic.

"All I was doing was challenging a right wing opponent of Jeremy



Marc Wadsworth

Corbyn," Marc told Socialist Worker.

Smeeth has worked as the director of public affairs and campaigns for the Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre.

"I stand on my record as an anti-racist, as a socialist, as an internationalist," Marc said. He described himself as "someone who wants to see this country run by the many, not the few—by our class."

A model motion has been produced defending Marc. The motion, circulated among trade union activists, says, "The decision by Labour's National Constitutional

Committee to expel anti-racist activist Marc Wadsworth from Labour was without foundation.

"The ferocity of the current accusations of antisemitism in the Labour Party is not related to the small incidence of antisemitism to be found in the party, but is driven by attempts to undermine the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn."

## Target

Marc was clear that the attack on him is a "proxy attack on Jeremy himself. The main target is the left wing leader of the Labour Party, who I support and have known for over 40 years."

The smears over antisemitism come from the Labour right, many of whom have not shied away from whipping up other forms of racism. Marc pointed out the hypocrisy of their attacking a prominent anti-racist campaigner, arguing his record "speaks for itself."

"I totally and utterly abhor antisemitism and all forms of racism," he said.

"That includes anti-black racism, which is rife. It includes the treatment of the Windrush Generation, which shows this government is rotten to the core."



# Trump dials up threat of new war in Middle East

He aims threats at Iran while backing Israel's warmongering all the way, says Nick Clark

**US PRESIDENT Donald Trump has ratcheted up tensions with Iran—threatening more war in the Middle East.**

Trump was set to announce whether he would scrap an agreement with Iran as Socialist Worker went to press.

Under the “Iran deal”, signed in 2015, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear programme.

In return the US, Britain, France and Germany agreed to lift sanctions that hit Iran's oil and banking industries. But Trump has repeatedly attacked the deal. If he were to scrap the agreement, it could pave the way for a return to sanctions on Iran.

But even if Trump sticks with the deal, his threats and bluster will have bolstered the US's close ally Israel.

Israel is threatening war against Iran in Syria. It has launched several missile attacks against Iranian military forces in Syria over the past several months.

## Elaborate

Iran has gained a foothold in Syria—and possibly military bases—after joining the Syrian civil war to prop up dictator Bashar al-Assad.

An Israeli missile attack on a military base in Syria last week killed some 27 people, most of them Iranians.

Now Israeli officials claim that Iran is preparing to launch a revenge missile attack.

Warmongering Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu wants Trump to scrap the deal.

He even staged an elaborate PR stunt last week claiming to have evidence that Iran has itself broken its terms—although the information he produced has long been publicly available.

Yet other US allies, including French president Emmanuel Macron and British Tory foreign secretary Boris Johnson begged Trump not to “decertify” the deal.

This isn't because they're against war in the Middle East—Johnson and Macron both championed

## BACK STORY

**The 2015 Iran deal limited the country's nuclear programme**

- The US wanted to curb Iran's power in the region, but was wary of doing it by military means
- The deal is up for renewal on Saturday 12 May
- Trump is a long-time opponent of the deal
- Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu is pushing for a confrontation with Iran and Syria
- Trump and Netanyahu threaten more war in the Middle East

the West's airstrikes on the Syrian regime last month.

But the deal was seen as a way to curb Iran's influence in the region when the US's power had been weakened.

Johnson flew to the US on Monday to speak to vice president Mike Pence and national security adviser John Bolton to argue against ditching the deal.

He also wrote for the New York Times newspaper and appeared on right wing news programme Fox and Friends, which Trump is known to watch.

But Bolton and a number of other advisers close to Trump are known to support a return to confrontation with Iran.

Trump's lawyer Rudy Giuliani said on Saturday that Trump was “committed to regime change” in Iran. And on Sunday the Guardian newspaper revealed that Trump aides hired a private Israeli spy firm to find dirt on the authors of the deal.

Trump's threats this week show that, weeks after the airstrikes on Syria, the threat of a deadly confrontation between rival powers in the Middle East hasn't gone away.



**On other pages...**

Why its right to oppose Israel  
>>>Pages 10&11

TRUMP SPEAKING in 2015 against the Iran deal

## FORTRESS EUROPE

# Refugees suffer as governments collude to keep them out at all costs

HORROR STORIES from refugee camps in Greece and Libya have revealed the cruelty of the European Union's (EU) border policies.

Undocumented migrants and refugees face horrific overcrowding in a camp on the Greek island of Lesbos.

On Sunday 350 undocumented migrants and refugees landed on Lesbos and the nearby island of Chios.

An agreement between the EU and Turkey sees Greek police detain refugees as they arrive on the island after making the dangerous sea crossing across the Mediterranean.

They can then be deported to Turkey. And the Greek government, led by the supposedly left wing Syriza party, attempted to prosecute five volunteers who were arrested in Lesbos for helping refugees.

Three Spanish firefighters and two Danish aid workers were acquitted on Monday of charges of people smuggling.

Greek fascist organisations have also used the crisis caused by the government's cooperation with the EU to stir up racism and threaten refugees.



Arrested for helping refugees

Nazis attacked a rally of refugees and migrants in the town of Mytileni on Lesbos a fortnight ago.

The refugees were protesting against poor conditions in the refugee camp, when 200 armed men attacked the rally shouting, “burn them alive.”

The attackers, including members of the fascist Golden Dawn, threw fireworks, stones and bottles at the refugees, apparently targeting children.

In the wake of the attack, Greek police rounded the refugees up and forcibly transported them to the refugee camp.

Lorraine Leete of the Lesbos Legal Centre told the Al Jazeera news website, “Since November [2017], the attacks have been increasing.”

The EU's racist border policy is responsible for the ongoing crisis.

Its border force Frontex enforces it, as does the coastguard and police forces of its member states and allies such as Turkey.

An example of this is Britain and Italy's cosy relationship with Libya.

Both EU states provide resources and training to the Libyan coastguard, in return refugees and migrants travelling to Italy are forced back to Libya.

The consequence of that policy became clear last week.

The Doctors Without Borders charity reported “inhumane” conditions at a detention centre in Zuwara. Some 800 people are held captive there. “The situation is critical,” said the charity's emergency program manager Karline Kleijer.

Racist border laws mean refugees fleeing war and poverty are thrust back into barbaric conditions.

## Wrecking our NHS

I AM 75 and was a relatively fit anti-fracking campaigner until January when I developed severe neck and shoulder pain.

I had to fight for a doctor's appointment as two doctors had recently left. By February the pain was so bad I was spending half the night in an armchair. No GPs were available so I saw a nurse and persuaded her to refer me to a consultant.

The earliest appointment was four weeks away. The receptionist suggested I ring for a cancellation. I did, but a recorded voice said the hotline was not staffed due to shortages.

I had no choice but to pay to see an osteopath, who re-diagnosed the problem. There was a marked improvement but I was still in great pain.

In mid-April I fought again to see a GP and persuaded her to arrange an ultrasound. After that appointment the doctor said he would immediately forward the ultrasound images to my GP.

But the surgery said results will take seven weeks to arrive from Scarborough hospital. I now have another appointment to see a specialist—in mid-July!

After months of debilitating pain I still don't have a proper diagnosis and am unable to perform even basic tasks, never mind join in the important activities of my local anti-fracking group.

The NHS is being destroyed so US corporations can move in for the rich pickings. We need to fight now to save it.

**Brian Chambers**  
Filey, North Yorkshire



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

## After academy battle we're stronger and more united

ACADEMY PLANS at Cumberland school in Newham, east London, (Socialist Worker, 2 May) have gone ahead. We have lost, but we have won much, and we are not defeated.

Last week we had a NEU union meeting of around 80 people at the end of the school day before the full staff meeting.

My introduction to the meeting was as upbeat as I could make it.

I wanted to remind everyone that we went into the battle determined to stand up for principled opposition to academies.

And now we need to continue to strengthen ourselves as a union group. We acknowledged that we have been a major part of a

borough-wide, London-wide, and apparently a developing national fightback.

Some schools have turned back from academising, although unfortunately Newham council's U-turn to an anti-academy position came too late for us.

We are determined to continue building links with parents as we did not achieve what we needed to stop the academy—an unstoppable force of parents, local people and workers.

I proposed the union's guidance at this point to suspend the strikes.

We voted unanimously to do so and went into the staff meeting as a union group together. I made a

statement on behalf of the union group and after the meeting introduced the new secretary of Newham NEU to the chief executive of the school.

Our union secretary made it quite clear that we are here to fight our corner.

This phase of the dispute ended, under the circumstances, as best it could—united and proud. Our new solidarity with each other and with wider forces will survive this defeat.

Thanks to Socialist Worker for its coverage throughout the dispute—good work and fantastic support.

**Carolyn McGrath**  
NEU rep, Cumberland School, Newham

## Now we have Corbyn, ditch independence

WHY DOES Socialist Worker still support Scottish independence?

The only good reason for a Yes vote in the 2014 referendum was to break from the Tory British state and register opposition to the successive regimes of austerity.

I didn't agree with that, but I could see the argument.

But now there is the very real possibility of a Jeremy Corbyn government in Westminster. If people still obsessively hark on about

independence they are not going to vote Labour. And Labour isn't going to alter its stance.

And that means we are likely to have continuing Tory rule or at best a minority Labour government that has to rely on the highly unreliable Scottish National Party.

Clear out all the secondary issues. Full speed ahead to an all-British government that can raise the banner of change.

**Ann McIvey**  
Paisley

## Stop anti-abortionists harassing women

RECENTLY IN Cardiff we had to experience the anti-abortion group Abort67 setting up large images of foetuses.

Abort67 actively campaigns against a woman's right to choose. Its members often stand in cities and towns with offensive imagery that harasses women.

This was clearly very upsetting for a number of people, many of whom complained to the police.

When I complained to the police, they told me the display was legally allowed as it was



Taking on Abort67 in London

informative. Women should be supported, not made to feel guilty for their choices.

Groups such as Abort67, Society for the Protection of Unborn Children and 40 Days for

Life want to tell women what they can and can't do with their bodies.

I was pleased to see that there was opposition to the March for Life organised by anti-abortionists in Parliament Square in London last Saturday.

Such events actively aim to restrict women's rights.

We need to defend a woman's right to choose, and fight the restrictions women face when making decisions about their own bodies.

**Helen O'Sullivan**  
Cardiff

Just a thought...

### Don't repeat ID for voting

THE PILOT schemes that forced people to provide ID to vote last week in Bromley, Gosport, Swindon, Watford and Woking were a disaster.

People were prevented from voting who had every right to vote.

And a polling officer in Bradford demanded ID even though Bradford wasn't even in the scheme.

ID requirements hit poor people, young people and black people. We should oppose them.

**Jane Roberts**  
West London

### Will machines delete class?

WHAT WILL socialism look like in a world where technology is steadily encroaching on working class roles?

**Tim Rothwell**  
Leamington

### 'Enemy aliens' were locked up

THE TREATMENT of the Windrush Generation has highlighted the racism of the ruling establishment.

Caitlin Davies has produced an excellent book, *Bad Girls*, which gives examples of the mistreatment of women in Holloway prison.

She reveals that during the Second World War thousands of Jewish women who had escaped Nazi Germany were imprisoned without trial in Britain. Being an "enemy alien" meant they were locked up not for anything they had done but because of who they were.

**John Appleyard**  
Liversedge, West Yorkshire

### Let's unite against Tories

SOCIALISTS should make the links between the home office's racism and the state's attacks on disabled people that have caused severe damage, even deaths.

**Phil Howard**  
Hull

### No cuts for the parasites

TWO BENTLEYS, three Rolls-Royces, three Daimlers and then one horse-drawn coach for the royal wedding. Austerity?

**Jasmine Wright**  
On Facebook

# WHY IT'S RIGHT TO OPPOSE ISRAEL

Supporters of Israel try to deny its brutal history and attack critics of the state as antisemitic. On the 70th anniversary of the Nakba, when Palestinians were driven from their land, Nick Clark explains why it's right to show solidarity with Zionism's victims

**THE EXISTENCE of the state of Israel is a racist endeavour. The ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians 70 years ago—and their suffering at the hands of the Israeli state today—proves this is true.**

But people who say this are under attack. Banning the right to call Israel racist underlies the accusations of antisemitism made against Jeremy Corbyn and the left.

Yet next Tuesday Palestinians will commemorate the 70th anniversary of an event that can only be described as a campaign of ethnic cleansing against them.

The creation of Israel saw nearly one million Palestinians systematically expelled from their land. To Palestinians that expulsion is known as the Nakba—or catastrophe.

It laid the foundations for a state that still sustains itself on Palestinian oppression.

That state was born on 14 May 1948 when Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, signed its founding declaration. From the start, Israel could only survive with the backing of the major imperialist powers, including Britain.

Just months before its creation, the United Nations (UN) had decided on a plan to split Palestine in two—without the agreement of the Palestinians.

The plan was clearly unjust. It was to “give” 56 percent of Palestine to colonisers who at the time owned

just 6 percent of the land and made up one third of the population. Yet even this wasn't enough.

Israel's founding declaration didn't specify its borders. Days before he had even declared Israel's formation, Ben-Gurion was already talking about expanding them.

Before the UN plan was agreed, Ben-Gurion had written that Israel's borders “will be determined by force and not by the partition resolution”.

He also told members of the future Israeli government that there were “no territorial boundaries for the future Jewish state”.

By 1949 Israel had invaded and occupied closer to 80 percent of Palestine, claiming it all as its own.

The founders of Israel had no intention of sticking to the UN's partition plan, or of respecting a Palestinian state. They were motivated by an ideology—Zionism—that aimed to create an exclusively Jewish state.



**Early Zionist groups wrongly accepted that antisemitism would always exist**

Jewish state in all of Palestine. Zionism began as a response to violent antisemitism in Europe towards the end of the 19th century—particularly in the Russian Empire. States used Jews as scapegoats, and encouraged racist mobs to attack Jewish communities.

Several Jewish groups, particularly socialists, heroically resisted this. But the Zionists wrongly accepted that antisemitism would always exist. Their answer was to colonise Palestine and establish an exclusively Jewish state.

## Partition

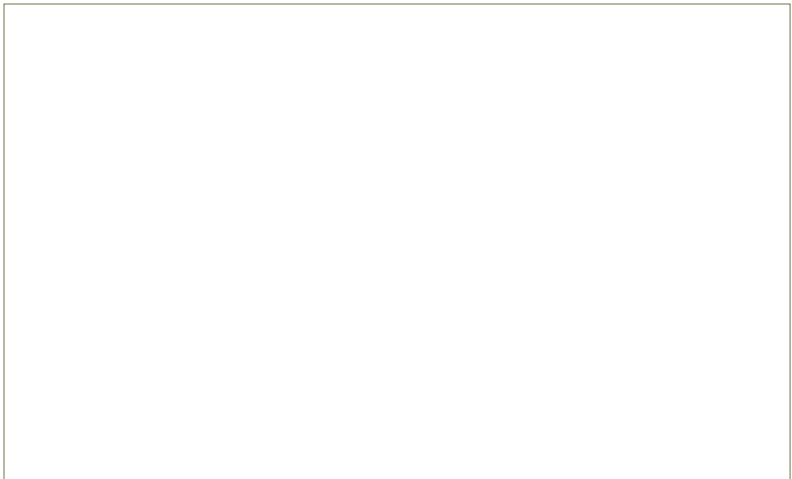
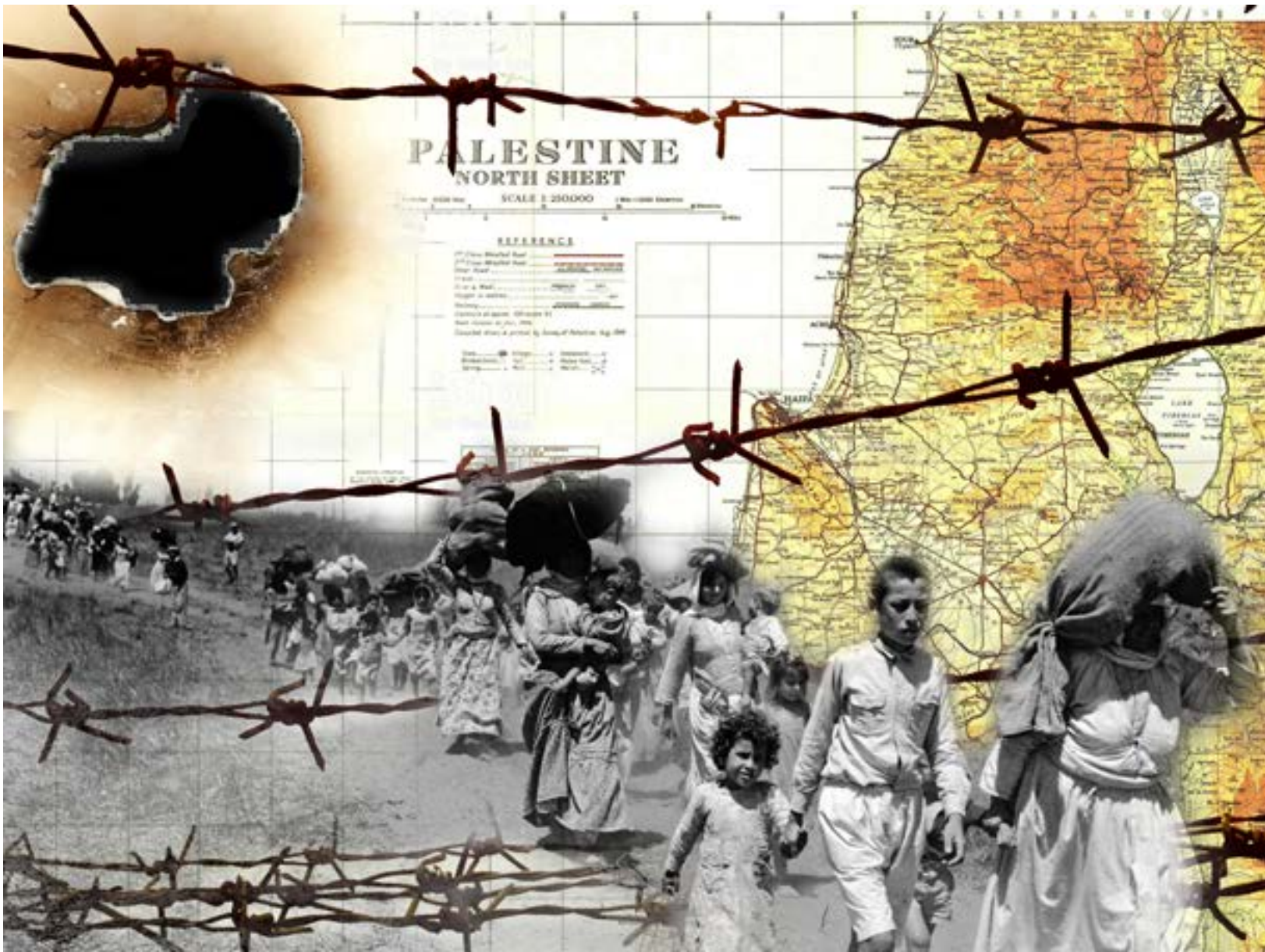
There was one major problem—the people who already lived there. An exclusively Jewish state needed an overwhelming Jewish majority which the UN's partition plan didn't give.

Ben-Gurion's problem with the plan was that, “There are 40 percent non-Jews in the areas allocated to the Jewish state.

“Such a demographic balance questions our ability to maintain Jewish sovereignty. Only a state with at least 80 percent Jews is a viable and stable state.”

The Zionists developed a deeply racist attitude towards Palestine's Arabs—who were mostly non-Jewish—that enabled the colonisation and occupation.

When it came to partition the budding Zionist state developed a systematic plan to clear Palestinians out of its territory and ensure a Jewish majority. Supporters of Israel still



**Palestinians flee from their land in 1948 after being expelled by Zionist militias (main graphic) Palestinian children hold up keys as a symbol of their desire to return to their family homes that were stolen by the Israeli state (above)**

say that no such plan existed. They say that Palestinians fled because of a war with neighbouring Arab states after Israel's creation.

But a plan did exist and it even had a name—Plan Dalet. It was a military operation to capture and clear out Arab villages to add to the new Israeli state. The techniques it used were clear—“By destroying villages (by setting fire to them, by blowing them up, and by planting mines in their rubble).

“In the case of resistance, the armed forces must be wiped out and the population expelled outside the borders of the state.”

Those techniques were honed and developed in the months leading up to Israel's formal creation. Some 250,000 Palestinians had already

been expelled from Palestine by 14 May 1948.

Operations were described using Hebrew words associated with cleansing—“tihar” meaning “purifying”, “nikkuy” meaning “cleaning”.

If there is still any doubt that expulsion of Palestinians was always the aim, see the words of Ben-Gurion one month before the partition plan was adopted. “They can either be mass arrested or expelled,” he said. “It is better to expel them.”

In this matter-of-fact way, Ben-Gurion described a policy that brought horror to Palestinians. Some 850,000 were made refugees.

The Zionist army, the Hagana, carried out atrocities and massacres, reducing entire villages to rubble.

In the city of Haifa, where Jews and Arabs both lived, the Hagana besieged Arab areas with heavy shelling and sniper fire. The Hagana's elite Carmeli brigade launched an assault on its Arab neighbourhoods.

The brigade's commander Mordechai Maklef—who later became the Israeli army's chief of staff—gave simple orders. “Kill any Arab you encounter. Torch all inflammable objects and force open doors with explosives.”

Haifa's Palestinians fled to the city's port and took shelter in its market. Hagana mortars shelled the crowded streets where they gathered, causing people to stampede to board boats leaving the city.

Several people were crushed or trampled in the panic. One witness

described how “the boats in the port were soon filled with living cargo. The overcrowding in them was horrible. Many turned over and sank with all their passengers.”

That process of ethnic cleansing and partition is one of the greatest crimes of the 20th century. Its consequences are still felt by Palestinians.

The Palestine Solidarity Campaign is organising Nakba Day protests across Britain. Full list at [bit.ly/Nakba70PSC](http://bit.ly/Nakba70PSC)

**An Israeli F-16 fighter aircraft used to lash out at those who dare resist the state (top) Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has been the target of a right wing smear campaign that labels him as conniving with antisemitism (above, top) Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu (above) Israeli soldiers arrest a young Palestinian (below)**

## Can there ever be a free Palestine?

**P**ALESTINIAN refugees and their descendants from 1948 number around six million today. They have never been allowed to return to the land they were expelled from.

More than 1.5 million of them still live in refugee camps that are now more like built up, crowded slums.

The partition of Palestine didn't lead to a Palestinian state. Areas of Palestine left by the Israelis became attached to Jordan and Egypt, and then occupied by Israel after the Six Day War of 1967.

The “Palestinian territories”—the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip—became economically dependent on Israel, and stunted by it.

Palestine had been an agricultural society, but much of its fertile land ended up in Israel. And while Israel's economy boomed, Palestinians remained in poverty.

They became a cheap source of labour for Israel that could be turned on and off like a tap.

A supposed peace deal signed between Israeli and Palestinian leaders in 1993—the Oslo Accords—was supposed to lead to a “viable Palestinian state”. Instead it drove the effects of partition deeper into Palestinian society.

Israel used peace talks to deny responsibility for Palestinian refugees and to browbeat the Palestinian Authority (PA) into dropping the demand for their right to return.

After Oslo the Occupied Territories were divided up still further into three zones, with varying degrees of control.

Israel controls imports and exports to the Palestinian territories, and has a monopoly on basic commodities. It collects taxes on behalf of the PA, along with contributions to an Israeli benefits system that Palestinians are not entitled to claim.

The PA was required to



**A ‘peace deal’ signed in 1993 was supposed to lead to a ‘viable Palestinian state’**

circulate the Israeli currency, the New Israeli Shekel, and forbidden from launching its own without permission.

In areas under its control, Israel has built vast settlements the size of cities, connected to Israel by Israeli-only roads and railways. Inside the settlements are factories for Israeli products, made using low-paid Palestinian labour.

This set-up is justified by the same racism behind the Nakba. It still denies Palestinians' claim to any of their land—and often even their existence as a people.

And it has the same purpose—to claim all of Palestine for Israel.

This has caused a crisis for Israel. As its occupation of Palestine deepens, the idea that there can be two separate states for Jews and Arabs looks increasingly impossible.

The only solution is a single state, where Arabs and Jews can live together with equal democratic rights. But this doesn't fit with the project of building an exclusively Jewish state of Israel. Palestinians would once again be the majority.

## Expelled

In the face of this crisis, Israel has reacted violently. It has massacred protesters in Gaza trying to cross the border fence to return to the land they were expelled from.

The return of Palestinian refugees to Israel is seen as a threat to Israel's existence. Yet the right to even describe this system as racist, or to suggest that Arabs and Jews can live together, is being slowly rolled back.

Jeremy Corbyn has been criticised for refusing to sign Labour up to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism “with all its examples”.

These include “claiming that the existence of a state of Israel is a racist endeavour”.

That definition has already been used to shut down debates on Palestine, and to block support for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign in universities.

Faced with this, it's important to stand up for the right to be anti-Zionist and to expose the racism at the heart of Israel.

Banning the right to call Israel a racist state means silencing Israel's victims. It makes it impossible for Palestinians to explain their history and what Israel has done to them.

Above all, it means erasing the memory of the Nakba.

## WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

### INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

### REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

### THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

### INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties.

We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

### THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to [www.swp.org.uk](http://www.swp.org.uk) or phone 020 7840 5602 for more information

## { SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

### BIRMINGHAM: CITY CENTRE

#### Kill all the Gentlemen—book launch with author Martin Empson

Wed 6 Jun, 7pm,  
Birmingham LGBT Centre,  
38/40 Holloway Circus,  
B1 1EQ

### CHESTERFIELD

#### Kill all the Gentlemen—book launch with author Martin Empson

Thu 17 May, 7.30pm,  
Chesterfield Library,  
New Beetwell St,  
S40 1QN

## { SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

### ABERDEEN

#### 1968—the year the world caught fire

Wed 16 May, 6pm,  
Belmont Cinema Cafe,  
49 Belmont St,  
AB10 1JS

### BIRMINGHAM: CITY CENTRE

#### What causes gun and knife crime?

Wed 16 May, 7pm,  
Birmingham LGBT Centre,  
38/40 Holloway Circus,  
B1 1EQ

### BRADFORD

#### Politics of the mind—Marxism and mental distress

Thu 17 May, 7pm,  
Glyde House,  
Little Horton Lane  
(opposite the ice rink),  
BD5 0BQ

### BRISTOL

#### 1968—the year the world caught fire

Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
YHA,  
14 Narrow Quay,  
BS1 4QA

### BURNLEY AND PENDLE

#### Trotsky on the Labour Party

Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
Red Triangle Cafe,  
160 St James's St,  
BB11 1NR

### COLCHESTER

#### 1968—the year the world caught fire

Thu 31 May, 7.30pm,  
The New Inn,  
Chapel Street South,  
CO2 7AX

### COVENTRY

#### How can we stop the rise of the far right across Europe?

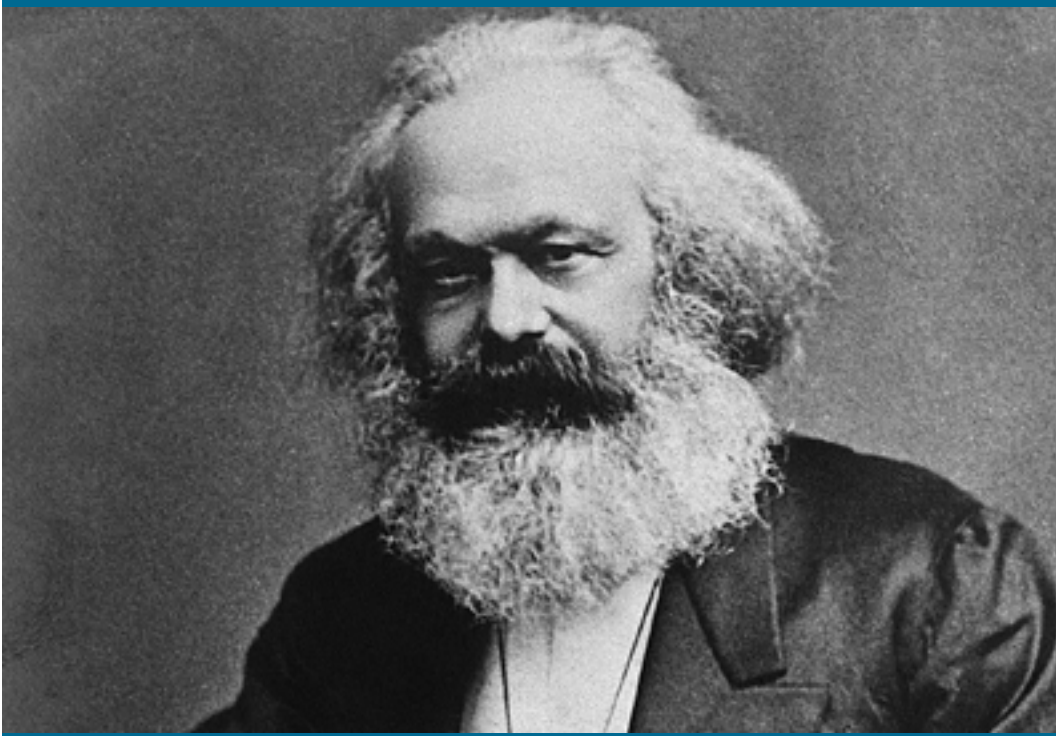
Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
West Indian Centre,  
159 Spon St,  
CV1 3BB

### DERBY

#### The family and the origins of women's oppression

Thu 24 May, 7pm,  
West End Community Centre,  
Mackworth Rd (next to Britannia Mill),  
DE22 3BL

SOCIALIST WORKER PUBLIC MEETINGS



# Marx@200

## The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

**EDINBURGH**  
Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
7 Victoria St,  
EH1 2JL

**LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE**  
Thu 17 May, 7pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Meeting House Lane,  
LA1 1TX

**LONDON: NEWHAM**  
Wed 16 May, 7pm,  
Stratford Advice Arcade,  
107-109 The Grove (next to Morrisons car park),  
E15 1HP

**OXFORD**  
Wed 23 May, 7.30pm,  
Restore, Manzil Way  
(off Cowley Rd),  
OX4 1YH

**GLASGOW**  
Sun 27 May, 4.30pm,  
The Griffin,  
266 Bath St,  
G2 4JP

**LEEDS: CITY CENTRE**  
Thu 17 May, 7pm,  
The Swarthmore Education  
Centre, 2-7 Woodhouse  
Square, LS3 1AD

**NEWCASTLE**  
Thu 17 May, 7pm,  
Mining Institute,  
Neville Hall, Westgate Road,  
NE1 1SE

**SHEFFIELD AND SOUTH YORKSHIRE**  
Thu 17 May, 6pm,  
Central United  
Reform Church,  
60 Norfolk St, S1 2JB

### DONCASTER

#### 1968—the year the world caught fire

Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Oxford Place,  
off St James St,  
DN1 3SL

### EXETER

#### The Labour Party—from Keir Hardie to Corbyn

Thu 24 May, 7pm,  
Exeter Community Centre,  
17 St. Davids Hill,  
EX4 3RG

### GLASGOW

#### How can Scotland win independence?

Thu 17 May, 7pm,  
Avant Garde,  
33-44 King St,  
Merchant City,  
G1 5QT

### HULL

#### The Windrush scandal—fighting against racist immigration controls

Thu 24 May, 7pm,  
Cafe licious, 104 Cottingham  
Rd, HU6 7RZ

### LONDON: CENTRAL

#### Imperialism and revolution—who was Frantz Fanon?

Thu 17 May, 6.15pm,  
Room 215, UCL Foster Court  
Building, Malet Place,  
WC1E 6BT

### LONDON: HACKNEY

#### 1968—the year the world caught fire

Thu 17 May, 7.30pm,  
The Round Chapel,  
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner  
Lower Clapton Rd),  
E5 0PU

### LONDON: HARINGEY

#### Corbyn, antisemitism and Palestine

Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
St John Vianney Church Hall,  
386 West Green Rd (corner  
Vincent Rd), N15 3QH

### LONDON: ISLINGTON

#### The Windrush scandal—fighting against racist immigration controls

Wed 16 May, 7pm,  
The Old Fire Station,  
84 Mayton St,  
N7 6QT

### LONDON: LEWISHAM

#### Women and revolution

Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
West Greenwich Community  
and Arts Centre,  
141 Greenwich High Rd  
(near Greenwich station),  
SE10 8JA

### LONDON: SOUTH

#### The Windrush scandal—fighting against racist immigration controls

Wed 16 May, 7pm,  
Vida Walsh Centre,  
2b Saltoun Rd (near Effra Rd,  
facing Windrush Square),  
SW2 1EP

### LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

#### 1968—the year the world caught fire

Wed 16 May, 7pm,  
Epainos Church,  
Lichfield Road,  
E3 5AT

### LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

#### Climate change

Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
William Morris  
Community Centre,  
6-8 Greenleaf Rd,  
Walthamstow, E17 6QQ

### MANCHESTER

#### Is the media all powerful?

Wed 16 May, 7pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
6 Mount St,  
M2 5NS

### OXFORD

#### What causes gun and knife crime?

Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
Restore,  
Manzil Way (off Cowley Rd),  
OX4 1YH

### POOLE AND DORCHESTER

#### Can there ever be a just war?

Thu 7 Jun, 7.30pm,  
Dorford Centre,  
2 Bridport Rd,  
DT1 1RR

### PORTSMOUTH

#### The Windrush scandal—fighting against racist immigration controls

Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
Somerstown  
Community Centre,  
River's St, PO5 4EZ

### SCARBOROUGH

#### Transphobia and women's rights—what do socialists say?

Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
Tap and Spile,  
94 Falsgrave Rd, YO12 5AZ

### SHEFFIELD: CITY CENTRE

#### 1968—the year the world caught fire

Thu 24 May, 7pm,  
Central United  
Reformed Church,  
60 Norfolk St (near Crucible  
Theatre), S1 2JB

### TELFORD

#### Palestine, antisemitism and defending Corbyn

Wed 30 May, 7.30pm,  
Carriages,  
The Parade,  
Wellington, TF1 1PY

### WOLVERHAMPTON

### AND WALSALL

#### 1968—the year the world caught fire

Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
Wild Bytes Cafe,  
Darlington St,  
WV1 4HW

### YORK

#### 1968—the year the world caught fire

Wed 16 May, 7.30pm,  
Sea Horse Hotel,  
4 Fawcett St,  
YO10 4AH

## { MOVEMENT EVENTS }

### DORCHESTER

#### Can Labour councils protect the poor?

Sat 2 Jun, 1.30pm,  
Colliton Club,  
Colliton Park,  
DT1 1XJ

Organised by Dorset Socialists

### LONDON

### Marx@200

Sat 19 May, 12 noon-6pm,  
Birkbeck, University of London,  
Malet St, Bloomsbury,  
London, WC1E 7HX

### NATIONAL

#### Marxism 2018—a festival of socialist ideas

Thu 5 till Sun 8 July,  
central London. A four-day  
political festival hosted by  
the Socialist Workers Party.  
[marxismfestival.org.uk](http://marxismfestival.org.uk)  
**Together Against Trump—  
national demonstration**  
Fri 13 July, Nationwide.  
Go to Together Against Trump:  
national demo on Facebook

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# Robert Kennedy's hypocrisy on display in new TV show

A new documentary glosses over uglier truths, but shows how Robert Kennedy was forced to acknowledge the Civil Rights Movement, says **Antony Hamilton**

**ON THE 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King's assassination it's a shame that Netflix has instead shone the spotlight on the man who ordered the FBI to investigate him.**

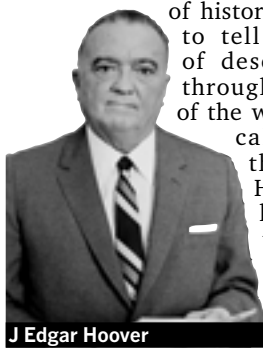
Robert Kennedy was born the 7th child in the incredibly wealthy Kennedy political dynasty. During his political career he moved from the head of the department for justice, in which he was criminalising black protesters, to opposing the Vietnam War and arguing for desegregation in the US South.

After the assassination of his brother John he threw himself into the race for president.

The title sequence sets the tone for the series. Jazz blares over progressive slogans, Kennedy's silhouette in every shot is in the image of a rock star on stage.

From the opening of the first episode it seems the entire project was to paint Kennedy as a Democrat demigod. He is portrayed as someone who always strived for success and won, recognised his responsibility to poor people and was adored and regularly mobbed by his supporters.

There was a danger this series could have been a whitewashing of history by trying to tell the story of desegregation through the eyes of the white political elite of the 1960s. However, halfway through the first episode we are told the stories



J Edgar Hoover



ROBERT KENNEDY was forced to adapt by the Civil Rights movement

of the Freedom Riders.

Leaders of the civil rights movement, such as the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) were reluctant to work with Bobby Kennedy because of his dedication to the McCarthyite witchhunt of communists.

However, its members feature in the series discussing their change of heart after discovering Bobby Kennedy had made a personal call to free King from jail after a sit-in in Georgia.

At the time racist Southern Democrats were threatening "to throw our votes to Nixon", the Republican presidential candidate.

This contradiction was at the heart of the Democratic Party through the 1960s. Bobby Kennedy walked the tightrope, holding the conservative south on his side while trying to curry favour with civil rights leaders.

Pressure from below pushed Bobby into voicing support for the movement.

After a call from Kennedy got King

out of jail black votes swung to the Democrats. JFK was elected president. One of his first acts was to make Bobby US attorney general—head of the department of justice.

Kennedy's ruthlessness seemingly knew no bounds. He ordered wire-tapping, opening mail, garbage collections, raids and the suppression of civil liberties.

He even signed the order to wire tap King, which was happily carried out by FBI head J Edgar Hoover. Hoover described all black leaders as communists and would later label the Black Panthers as the biggest threat to US security.

## Exploding

The huge pressure of the Civil Rights Movement exploding onto streets all across America forced Bobby to act.

He first called for black people to stop protesting and sit down for discussions, saying that the right way to change legislation was in the courts.

This changed when he received a call from King and agreed to send military protection to a meeting supporting the Freedom Riders.

The brutality of the violence they faced forced Washington to act and the movement carried on with help from a tenuous relationship of relying on Washington's guns.

Strangely, this series doesn't look into the many allegations of the Kennedy family's links with organised crime.

Nevertheless, I'd recommend everyone to watch it for an understanding of the contradictory relationship at the top during the Civil Rights movement.

Bobby Kennedy for President is a biographical mini-series on Netflix.com

## A brutal tale of profit and dispossession in Cambodia

### FILM

#### A CAMBODIAN SPRING

Directed by Chris Kelly  
Screenings in May and June  
[bit.ly/CambodianSpring](http://bit.ly/CambodianSpring)

**THIS FILM** focuses on life in Cambodia over a six-year period from 2009 to 2015, documenting the forcible evictions of poor families at the Boeung Kak Lake in Phnom Penh.

A company with government connections starts filling in the lake for property development.

The livelihoods and homes of the community

are threatened.

The film follows the lives of two mothers leading the struggle against the development—Tep Vanny and Srey Pov.

Buddhist monk Luon Sovath features too. He is a film maker and activist.

The filming is done on a day to day basis so we see events unfolding over years of the fight with security forces.

Powerful scenes include young daughters marching towards riot police demanding their mothers be released from prison.

Footage of the struggle



Watching the bulldozers roll in

is interspersed with atmospheric shots of the lake in the past and in the present day—as the bulldozers fill it in.

In the second half we see some of the personal differences and divisions

that arise within the group. But there is little political analysis and the wider political climate is depicted as a backdrop to the struggle of the families and the monk.

Despite this we do

see something of the tight link between Theravada Buddhism, the authoritarian government and its security forces.

We also see how the Boeung Kak struggle influenced the Cambodian Spring prior to 2013.

Then the government was severely threatened by a strike of 100,000 garment workers.

For a time there seemed to be an opening for real social change.

See this film for honest and detailed observations of struggle in Cambodia in recent years.

## EXHIBITION

### THE HISTORY OF ASIAN YOUTH CULTURE

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

Until 29 July. Free.

[birminghammuseums.org.uk](http://birminghammuseums.org.uk)

**ASIAN YOUTH Culture** explores the heritage and history of the lives and contributions of young Asian people in Britain.

It focuses on three periods—the 1950s and 1960s, the 1970s to the 1990s, and the 2000s to the present day.

The exhibition tells the story of how Asian people came to Britain as a consequence of Britain's need for labour in the 1950s and 1960s. It is a story deeply intertwined with the history of the British Empire.

What began as a temporary solution to a labour shortage became a turning point in history as people refused to be treated as second class citizens and fought back.

This exhibition tells parts of that story.

## THEATRE

### FRANKIE VAH

Written and performed by Luke Wright.

On tour throughout May and June.

Go to [bit.ly/FrankVah](http://bit.ly/FrankVah) for dates and tickets

**THIS PLAY** tells the story of a vicar's son turned radical punk poet.

Born into the stultifying life of the Essex countryside, Simon Mortimer jacks it all in to travel to London.

Debates rage about left politics and the soul of the Labour Party.

## TOP 5 BOOKS

Bestsellers at Bookmarks, the socialist Bookshop

- 1 **'Kill all the Gentlemen'**  
Martin Empson
- 2 **A Rebel's guide to Martin Luther King**  
Yuri Prasad
- 3 **The Fire Last Time**  
Chris Harman
- 4 **Marx 200—a review of Marx's economics 200 years after his birth**  
Michael Roberts
- 5 **Hope Lies in the Proles—George Orwell and the Left**  
John Newsinger

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Why not visit the shop at 1 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QE



Why write a book about rural struggles now?

Britain is a highly urban, industrialised society so it might seem strange to write about class struggle in the countryside.

But it is important for two main reasons. Firstly many of these struggles are part of our forgotten history—how ordinary men and women fought to protect their rights and improve their lives.

Secondly, the destruction of the commons, land enclosure and the transformation of agriculture into a food system run for profit was resisted at every stage.

Those struggles helped shape today's world.

It often seems that countryside revolts have great potential, but rarely reach it. What were the barriers to winning real change?

That's absolutely true. Many of the revolts I write about involved tens of thousands of people. During the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, famously led by Wat Tyler, John Ball and Jack Straw, 50,000 rebels stormed London.

There, together with the capital's poor, they destroyed symbols of their oppression. They forced King Richard to meet them and grant huge concessions.

But the rebels had illusions in the monarch, symbolised by their oath of allegiance to "King Richard and the true Commons". They allowed him to regroup his forces and destroy them.

Similar events took place in the 1536 Pilgrimage of Grace, when Henry VIII faced a mass rebellion in the north of England.

The state was prepared to use enormous force to defeat the peasantry, yet they looked to the good nature of the king, or local gentry.

To end the appalling oppression and exploitation of the peasantry meant transforming social relations—the destruction of the lords, the gentry and the rich.

The ruling class would not let that happen. And few among the poorest could conceive of things being radically different, so they tended to limit their demands.

How important was religion to the struggles?

Religion was fundamental to how people understood the world. The radical priest John Ball encouraged rebellion using speeches inspired by the Bible.

He helped make famous the phrase, "When Adam delved and Eve span, who then was the gentleman?" This took the language of the Bible as used by the local priests and made it into a revolutionary critique of society.



AN ILLUSTRATION of the 1381 Peasants' Revolt

# RECLAIM RURAL REVOLTS

In his new history of countryside struggles in England, Martin Empson shows how ordinary people have always fought for their rights—and what's needed for them to win



Martin Empson

Later struggles were often led by religious radicals.

Most of the Tolpuddle Martyrs were Methodists, as was Joseph Arch, who helped set up the first mass rural trade unions and led the "Revolt of the Fields".

Methodists were used to questioning the world as well as to public speaking, so they were ideal organisers.

Some rebellions were sparked directly by religious changes. In the 16th

century, Henry VIII began the English Reformation.

His changes transformed religious practice—including new prayer books, the removal of statues from churches and the dissolution of monasteries.

Ordinary people saw this as a direct assault on their beliefs and their lives.

The money and labour they had donated to the church were taken by the Crown. More importantly they were told their religious

identity was blasphemous and the institutions they relied on were taken away.

Sometimes they rebelled to defend their church and their communities.

Your book refers to some protests that specifically involved women. Were women involved in general revolts and uprisings too?

Events like the 1381 Peasants' Revolt or Jack Cade's Rebellion of 1450 were mass affairs involving whole communities.

But the role of women is sometimes hard to see in the historical record.

Despite the tens of thousands who took part in 1381, for instance, we only know of two named women—Katherine Gamen and Margaret Wrighte. They helped catch John De Cavendish, the Crown's hated representative in Suffolk.

In some later struggles women are much more prominently recorded. The historians JL and Barbara Hammond called 1795 the year of the "revolt of the housewives". Huge numbers of food riots took place, often initiated and led by women.

Women were at the forefront of protesting against the way that capitalism was transforming food production.

In 1800 in Wolverhampton a crowd of women rolled a dairyman in a ditch after smearing him all over in his butter. They were outraged at the price he was charging.

As capitalist agriculture developed, both men and women were employed but women were increasingly sidelined, except for certain roles.

So the great agricultural trade unions were entirely male, but women were part of strikes.

What about more recent rural organisation?

Early rural workers tended to resist on a local level.

The Swing Revolt that swept England in 1830 saw labourers respond to the threat of unemployment caused by the introduction of machinery.

As each group rose, they inspired others. They won some real improvements, but hundreds were imprisoned, some transported to penal colonies, and some hanged. Now they are usually forgotten.

Today the British Labour movement celebrates the Tolpuddle Martyrs annually.

This group of men formed a trade union in Dorset in 1834 and were transported to Australia. A massive solidarity campaign by the whole labour movement ensured they were eventually returned.

After Tolpuddle the rural union movement declined until the 1870s, when there was a huge explosion of trade unions and mass strikes.

These waves of strikes were initially very successful, but an offensive by the bosses stopped the workers.

In the early 1880s English agriculture was competing with cheap imports from Russia and the US, which undermined trade unionism and put large numbers on the dole. These strikes were inspirational, and at their height saw alliances with urban workers that created very powerful movements.

But they were often limited by union leaders who saw change as coming through parliament, not mass movements.

What are some of the lasting legacies of the struggles in the countryside?

Karl Marx wrote about how capitalism developed through a process of "primitive accumulation".

In the countryside this meant the enclosure of common land and the displacement of millions of people into urban areas.

Those who remained were no longer peasants but workers.

In Britain this meant our agriculture became shaped by capitalist interests very early on. Local food culture was undermined and farming became dominated by big business.

This is in part why agriculture in Britain employs so few people, is unsustainable and why our food industry produces so much unhealthy, processed food.

What lessons should people who want to change the world today take from these struggles?

The first thing is that ordinary people have always fought to improve their lives and often struggles can erupt seemingly out of nowhere.

In 1548 the ruling class had no idea that the following year would see enormous waves of peasant rebellion against religious changes and enclosure.

When Joseph Arch held his first union meeting he had no idea that within months it would have a membership of thousands.

Secondly organisation is always crucial.

Letters from John Ball urging villages to rise as



A plate to remember the Tolpuddle Martyrs (top), a portrait of Captain Swing (above) and king Henry VIII (below)



the Peasants' Revolt began were copied and passed from hand to hand.

Those relationships were the basis of a rebellion that nearly overthrew the monarch.

But organisations—whether networks of peasants, or unions—can only take things so far.

Soon other questions are raised—how to deal with the gentry, whether to rely on union leaders, whether to return to work, and so on.

In social movements today, in the countryside or the city, winning fundamental change requires socialist organisation.

## READ MORE

● **'Kill all the Gentlemen'—class struggle and change in the English countryside** by Martin Empson £14.99

● **When Adam Delved and Eve Span—a History of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381** by Mark O'Brien £7.99

● **The Making of the English working class** by EP Thompson £20.00

Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to [bookmarksbookshop.co.uk](http://bookmarksbookshop.co.uk)



## COMMENT

# Labour left must not give in to right over immigration

Promising to control levels of migration is a well trodden path for Labour. It's not one the left should follow, writes **Alistair Farrow**

THE WINDRUSH scandal has raised old arguments about immigration. "Legal", deserving migrants have been compared to undocumented, undeserving migrants.

Diane Abbott, Labour's shadow home secretary, said last week she would not treat "the Windrush Generation and others who have a right to be here as if they were illegal".

But when asked about whether Labour would have targets for deporting "illegal" migrants, Abbott said, "Any government department should have targets and performance indicators."

Maintaining the deportation regime means carrying out raids and checks on high streets, in schools and workplaces. It means denying medical care to people in hospitals. It means a continuation of the "hostile environment" policy.

Two years ago Abbott argued, "It is time people stopped talking about migrants as a problem."

"Our job is to say to people in the labour movement, what kind of solution is it for the underpaid and exploited to encourage them to think that another section of the working class is their enemy?"

What's behind Abbott's shift? The first thing to say is it's not new.

### Pressure

Throughout Labour's history, the closer the party has moved to office, the more pressure it is under to portray itself as a responsible party capable of managing the state.

It does this because it believes the state can be used as a vehicle to achieve socialism, or at least some level of social change.

Because of this Labour makes concessions as it draws closer to office, in particular over the question of racism.

In 1958 Labour leader

### DON'T GO back to this

Hugh Gaitskell argued that "every Commonwealth citizen has the right as a British subject to enter this country at will".

By the 1964 general election, the party leader Harold Wilson was attacking migrants.

"Labour accepts that the number of immigrants entering the United Kingdom must be limited," he said.

"Until a satisfactory agreement covering this can be negotiated with the Commonwealth, a Labour government will retain immigration control."

He was responding to increasing levels of racism in British society.

The Tories had waged a campaign of virulent anti-immigration rhetoric.

In Smethwick, in the West Midlands, the Tory candidate won after a vicious racist campaign.

Many in Labour thought their party should shift to the right over immigration to match them.

This pattern repeats itself. Labour's history is filled with times when it pandered

## The closer Labour moves to office, the more it makes concessions

to anti-migrant racism.

After Tory racist Enoch Powell made his infamous "Rivers of Blood" speech in 1968, the Labour government rushed through an Immigration Bill stopping Kenyan Asians coming to Britain.

In 1974 immigration rules said a woman travelling to Britain didn't need a visa if she was going to get married.

### Disgusting

This led to the disgusting policy, introduced under Labour, of immigration officials forcing Asian women to undergo virginity tests at airports.

In 2007 Gordon Brown responded to the economic crisis, and Labour's unpopularity, with the racist slogan "British jobs for British workers".

And Ed Miliband was so keen to appear "tough" on migrants that Labour even put a pledge for more immigration controls on a giant stone tablet, and emblazoned across mugs.

Now, as the possibility of a Labour government becomes increasingly likely, the pressure is on to tack right over immigration again.

One of the consequences of that move in the 1960s and 1970s was the legitimisation of racism and the rapid growth of the far right.

Today, the growth of the Football Lads Alliance and its joining with Ukip shows the threat from the far right is as real as ever.

Racism must be fought, not pandered to.

# Protests planned for key Grenfell dates

by ALISTAIR FARROW

## THE PUBLIC inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire could last well into 2020.

That's according to one of the lawyers representing the bereaved and survivors of the fire.

The shocking news raises concerns that dragging the inquiry out could be designed to allow people's anger to subside.

It's vital that isn't allowed to happen.

On 16 June, the Saturday after the one year anniversary of the fire, Justice4Grenfell and the FBU firefighters' union are backing a solidarity march at Downing Street.

And during last week's local election votes, Justice4Grenfell projected a message of solidarity onto Kensington and Chelsea Town Hall.

The timetable of the inquiry was announced recently.

The initial stage will deal with the immediate causes of the fire and events on the night. It will take about six



JUSTICE 4 Grenfell keeping the pressure up

PICTURE: JUSTICE4GRENFELL

months and is expected to conclude in November.

Two weeks of testimony from survivors and the families of the dead will open the inquiry. The later stage will look at wider issues of

responsibility, but not at top level decisions that allowed the Grenfell Tower fire to happen.

It will look at the immediate decisions relating to the refurbishment of Grenfell

Tower that saw the building clad in flammable material.

A protest has been called outside parliament for next Monday to coincide with a parliamentary motion about the fire. The motion demands

a decision-making panel is appointed alongside the chair, Sir Martin Moore-Bick.

Theresa May has already rejected calls for a panel.

The parliamentary motion is a result of a survivor-initiated petition that was helped over the requisite 100,000 mark by a tweet from rapper Stormzy.

"Without a panel, we risk a loss of confidence in the inquiry.

"We also want to remind the prime minister of our petition for a panel of decision-making experts to sit beside and support Sir Martin Moore-Bick," said survivors' group Grenfell United.

## Rehoused

Publicity for Monday's demonstration and silent walk has been jointly circulated by Justice4Grenfell and Grenfell United.

In Bradford a silent walk has been organised in solidarity with people marching in London.

Next month will mark one year since the fire.

Still people wait to be rehoused, still the guilty—Tory ministers, councillors

and redevelopment bosses—walk free.

Former lead councillor for housing in Kensington and Chelsea, Rock Fielding-Mellen, was re-elected at last week's local election.

The inquiry will never point the finger at most of those responsible, let alone all of them.

Some 304 high rise buildings with cladding similar to that on Grenfell have failed the government's tests.

Of these, 158 were social housing blocks.

Of the 158, just seven have had remedial work to remove cladding completed—another 104 are undergoing the work.

Part of the campaign for justice must be the demands that the guilty are held to account and building safety must no longer be treated as an inconvenience to avoid.

Campaigners and survivors are uniting in a powerful campaign to fight for justice.

That must be bold, militant and unafraid in demanding the truth where the establishment's public inquiry fails to tell the truth.

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# Fatbergs are byproduct of system addicted to waste

A combination of fat, human waste and wet wipes is blocking Britain's sewers. **Sarah Bates** looks at why fatbergs lurk beneath our city streets

**JUST** a few feet under our streets, a congealed mass is growing that threatens to burst out and cause chaos.

"Fatbergs"—icebergs of the sewer system—are made up of solidified oil, human waste and rubbish.

They present an immediate danger to those living directly above them.

Heavy rain can mean sewers can't pump water quick enough, so raw sewage could spill onto the streets above.

The Museum of London is currently displaying one as a way of raising "questions about how we live today".

Like everything around us, Fatbergs are a product of the society we live in.

That society treats the waste that we produce as an afterthought.

Products are designed to be disposable rather than reusable because it's more profitable.

## Ageing

The privatisation of public services, corporate disregard for public health and ageing infrastructure are also to blame for this bizarre new phenomenon.

The bosses' solution is to send workers down the sewer to destroy the fatbergs manually with picks and shovels.

September last year saw the discovery of the "monster" Whitechapel fatberg in east London—longer than Tower Bridge and weighing more than 130 tons.

And they're growing—an even larger beast was discovered in south London in April of this year.

The immediate responsibility for the rise of the fatbergs lies with

the water companies who own the sewers.

Now even those usually sympathetic to privatisation wonder how wise this is.

Bosses' newspaper the Financial Times said the conduct of Thames Water "raises questions as to whether England's unusual decision to allow private players to run the public water system for profit is working".

## Blockages

The industry body for the water industry, WaterUK, blames "92 percent of blockages" on a common household item—wet wipes.

WaterUK is keen to say that it happens simply because of incorrect waste disposal—their advice is "bin it, don't flush it".

That puts the blame on ordinary people rather than on a society which is incapable of disposing of waste in an efficient and environmentally-friendly manner.

The problem of how to dispose of waste is as fundamental as how houses are built, or how school operate.

Fatbergs are a particularly grotesque example of how capitalism is incapable of planning for the consequences of individual capitalists' constant drive for profits.

They exist partly because a vital public service—waste disposal—has been deregulated and auctioned off.

The emergence of fatbergs is one product of a society that stinks to high heaven.

## On other pages...

Struggle in the countryside  
>>Page 14 & 15

## Privatisation is to blame for the state of the sewer system

**BRITAIN'S WASTE** water systems were sold off to companies in 1989, as part of the Tories' drive to move assets from public to private ownership.

Thames Water supplies a third of the water and sewage systems in England, including to London and south east England.

But its record is just one example of why such important services shouldn't be just sold off to the lowest bidder.

In March 2017 Thames Water was fined a record £20.3 million for allowing 4.2 billion litres of sewage to flow into rivers, including the Thames. Judge



The Whitechapel monster

Francis Sheridan, who convicted Thames Water of the pollution, called it "borderline deliberate".

The company also paid no corporation tax from 2011 to 2015 yet handed out over £1 billion in dividends from 2006 to 2015.

## One job the robots can take

**DESTROYING** the fatbergs is left to teams of "flushers" who descend into the sewer and chip away at them with picks and shovels.

Often they work at night and are at risk of exposure to sewage.

The most dangerous elements of the job could be done by machines.

Thames Water, declared a "£650 million underlying operating profit" in 2017.

It should invest money into developing technology that could do the filthiest and most hazardous tasks.

## Bosses are to blame for bergs

**FLUSHED** wet wipes cling to the sides of sewers and their fibres pick up passing oil.

They're made from plastic, wood pulp and woven fabric and are often misleadingly marketed as "flushable". But many don't degrade after being flushed down the toilets.

It's a growing industry, and bosses are keen to market new products, which has led to increasing amounts of wipes in our sewers.

Although wet wipes are waste material, they don't have to be wasted.

Technology already exists to turn fatbergs into fuel that can be used in ordinary cars.

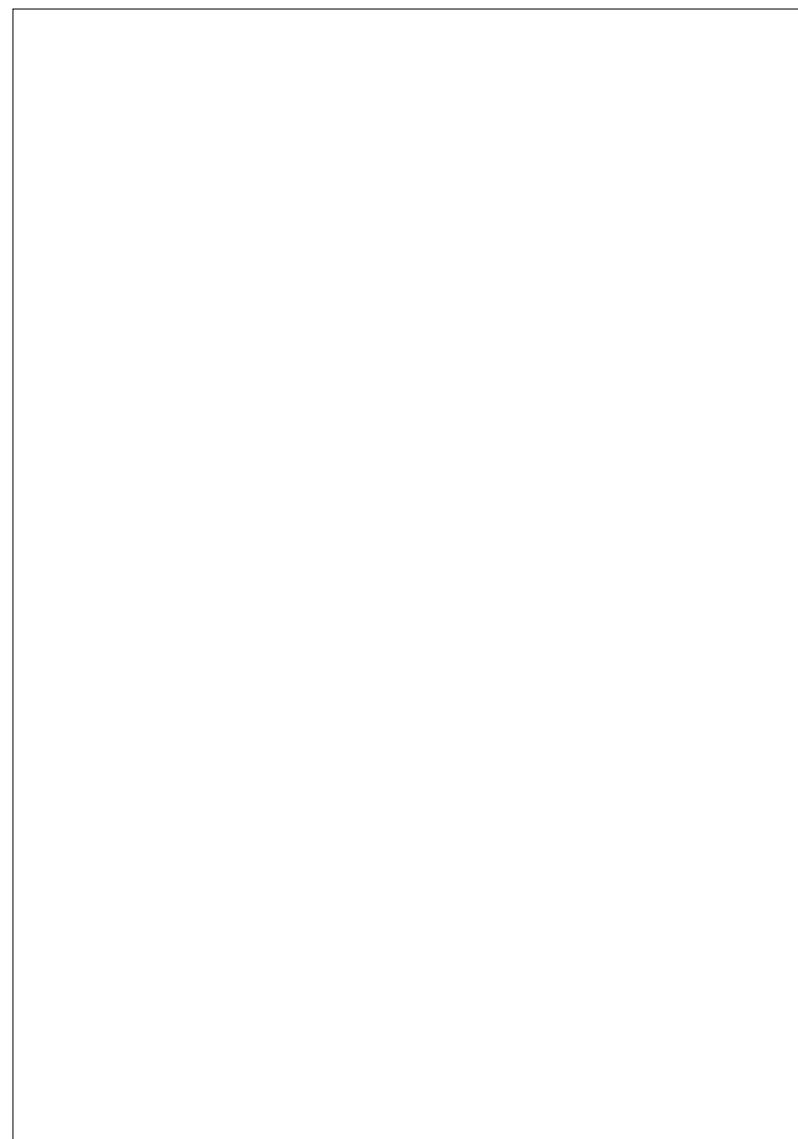
## Update the sewer system

**EFFECTIVE** water systems that prevent contamination are one of the most important aspects of public health.

Much of Britain's sewer network was built 200 years ago and was technically innovative at the time.

Now they are creaking under the weight of centuries of use. The cities they serve now are much larger than the ones they were built for.

But instead of being maintained as a public asset to the highest standards possible, they've been sold off piecemeal.



WOULD YOU like chips with that?—breaking up the fatberg

## How do you kill a fatberg?

ONE WAY of disposing of fatbergs is by converting them into biodiesel, otherwise known as "green fuel".

Specialist energy company Argent Fuel takes the fatbergs from water companies and refines them.

This happens by melting the fatbergs, pumping them through filters and cleaning out debris.

Up to 40 percent of the fatberg becomes biodiesel.

The biodiesel is used in buses and trucks, and its 80 percent better for the environment than regular fuel.

Another pioneering "fats to fuel" scheme by Yorkshire Water

gives buckets to households to collect their waste oil.

And it's made a huge difference—only one blockage was recorded in the two years since the scheme was rolled out.

So far it only operates in a small area—but it shows the potential for tackling fatbergs.

## IN BRIEF

**Rail strikers keep up battle for safety**

WORKERS ON Northern Rail planned to strike this Wednesday over attempts to impose driver only operated (DOO) trains.

RMT union members say rolling out DOO would make train travel unsafe and inaccessible.

Last Saturday guards on Greater Anglia struck for 24 hours over the same issue.

Workers also fighting DOO on South Western Railways called off planned strikes after bosses agreed to talks at the Acas conciliation service.

**Scotrail bosses say they will look again**

RMT AND TSSA transport union members in Paisley and Dumfermline called off a planned strike after a management U-turn.

Bosses wanted to axe 22 jobs from the CCTV monitoring service.

But now they have agreed a “joint review” of the service

**Who will conciliate Acas conciliators?**

WORKERS AT conciliation service Acas were set to strike on Friday of this week against attacks on pay grading and the closure of an office in Liverpool.

The PCS union members have been taking action short of strike since 25 April.

Bosses at Acas, which mediates in industrial disputes, want to impose changes that would also mean unmanageable workloads.

●Strike rally, Friday 11 May, 12 noon, Piccadilly Gate, Manchester

**In defence of rest days at Dial-a-Ride**

DIAL-A-RIDE WORKERS in London struck on 1 May and 3 May against new rosters and bosses’ attempts to remove ten rest days a year.

The Unite members, who work for Transport for London, provide special needs transport for elderly people, the vulnerable and those with disabilities. The 120 workers operate from depots in Woodford and Orpington.

**Solidarity with ITV workers in the US**

THE BECTU section of the Prospect union has called a protest against ITV in solidarity with workers in the US.

It is planned for this Thursday at ITV headquarters to coincide with ITV’s AGM.

Former US ITV worker Tiffany Magby slammed the “systematic discrimination and harassment” at the firm.

Meanwhile, workers at the Al Jazeera broadcasting network have suspended planned strikes over pay.

The NUJ and Bectu unions said talks produced “significant progress”.

## MAY DAY



MAY DAY events were held across Britain during the last week to mark International Workers’ Day. They included this one in Leeds.

PICTURE: NEIL TERRY

## COLLEGES

# Strikes to defend jobs, pay—and education

by SADIE ROBINSON

STRIKES ARE planned in a number of colleges as workers fight to defend pay, jobs and conditions.

At Hull College, UCU union members were set to walk out this Wednesday against a plan to slash the workforce by a third.

They are also set for a strike on Thursday and Friday of next week.

Workers at Hackney College and Tower Hamlets College in east London were set to strike on Friday over pay. They plan a further strike on Monday and Tuesday of next week.

UCU members at Lewisham Southwark College in south London have called a 48-hour strike on 22 and 23 May.

Bosses have refused to implement a national pay deal of just 1 percent. Some 93 percent of UCU members backed strikes in a ballot.

Lewisham Southwark College is set to merge with NCG, based in Newcastle, on 1 August. NCG chief executive Joe Docherty enjoyed a £227,000 salary in 2016-17, along with £33,000 in pension



UCU MEMBERS at Hull College met for a branch meeting on 1 May and showed their resolve

PICTURE: UCU HULL

contributions and £21,000 from benefits in kind, according to the group’s accounts.

UCU members at Bradford College have overwhelmingly voted for strikes to stop an attack on their contracts and job cuts.

Some 88 percent voted for strikes in a ballot, on a turnout of 61 percent.

The college has announced plans to cut 75 jobs after it was issued with a financial notice

to improve in March. UCU regional official Julie Kelley said, “Bradford College can be in no doubt about how angry their staff are at plans to cut jobs.

The money’s there to fund jobs and pay rises. Figures last month showed that over a third of college principals grabbed a pay rise of 10 percent or more in 2016-17.

Seventeen of them earned over £200,000.

## TEACHERS

■NEU UNION members at The Village School in Brent, north London, were to strike this Thursday over conditions.

■IN A victory against academisation, Calverton primary school in Newham, east London, has decided to remain a local authority school.

■EDUCATION workers at Connaught School for Girls in north east London were set to continue their strikes this week to win inner London pay scales. They have already held ten days of strikes.

## TAXI DRIVERS

PRIVATE HIRE taxi drivers protested outside the offices of Transport for London (TfL) on Thursday of last week against what they say are discriminatory policies.

TfL refuses to recognise the private hire drivers’ union United Private Hire Drivers (UPHD), a branch of the Independent Workers of Great Britain.

The majority of private hire drivers are from ethnic minorities. Chair of UPHD London Abdura Hadi said, “TfL’s refusal to

allow dedicated trade union recognition for 115,000 mostly BAME minicab drivers is indefensible.”

UPHD is demanding that TfL better regulates the operations of ride-hailing app firms such as Uber.

One example is the demand TfL makes workers’ rights a condition of such firms operating in London.

National chair of UPHD James Farrar said, “We have asked the Mayor and TfL to take meaningful action but they punish us more.”

## NHS WORKERS

## Porters push for a strike

HUNDREDS OF low-paid hospital workers facing the threat of outsourcing in Lancashire have voted overwhelmingly for strikes.

The Unison union members have voted by 89 percent for industrial action on a turnout of 73 percent.

The union had not called any strike dates as Socialist Worker went to press on Tuesday afternoon.

Bosses at Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust want to transfer 900 porters, cleaners, security staff and others at three hospitals to WWL Solutions Ltd.

While the company is—for the moment—wholly owned by the hospital, the move is “back door privatisation”, a Wigan porter told Socialist Worker.

“The new starters would be on worse terms and conditions than us, they wouldn’t get better pay for weekends and night shifts. They would be getting all that work because it would save the company money.

“Once we’re replaced privatisation would come in—and it wouldn’t just be our department.”

The workers have defied bosses’ scaremongering tactics, such as claims that outsourcing is necessary for tax reasons.

The porter said, “They have also lied to us, they first said we had to do it because we have a £12 million deficit. Now they have said we’ve got a £8 million profit.”

The porters have shown their determination to resist the attacks—and won the support of trade unionists and local Labour MP Lisa Nandy. The porter said, “I think there will be a lot of people on the picket line if they stick by their words.

“There will be the workforce and a couple of hundred other supporters.”

Unison should now name the day for strikes and every trade unionist should build solidarity for their fight.

■AMBULANCE workers in the north west of England have voted for strikes as part of a long-running pay dispute.

The GMB union members voted by 84 percent for industrial action. They have been waiting for the outcome of a job evaluation for more than 12 years.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## Kirklees on brink of action

RESULTS OF two important ballots were due this week in Kirklees, West Yorkshire.

Unison union members working on the bins for Kirklees council and workers at Kirklees College are balloting for action in separate disputes.

Bin workers have said “enough is enough” after bullying, racism and being ordered to complete extra rounds. The ballot follows a protest last November when the extra rounds were proposed.

Management promised to investigate the workers’ grievances. But their investigation only started two weeks ago when the ballot was announced.

And management have refused to interview any

Unison members. Activists expect a large turnout and vote for action.

And at Kirklees college workers are balloting after college bosses threatened large job cuts and attacks to conditions. They blamed the attacks on “financial difficulties”.

Unison have been negotiating through Acas and have won concessions on compulsory redundancies and salary protection but the offers so far are not acceptable.

UCU members at the college are also balloting for action. Activists are campaigning to ensure a large turnout in the ballot to achieve a satisfactory deal. Nick Ruff, Kirklees Unison branch chair (pc)

## RESTAURANT WORKERS

WORKERS AT TGI Fridays restaurants in Milton Keynes and Covent Garden are set to strike on Friday 18 May. The workers’ Unite union has said strikes will continue “over consecutive Fridays during the summer.”

The strikes are over changes to tips payments at the chain. These have meant 40 percent of the service charge goes to kitchen workers. Waiting staff could lose up to £260 a month.

There is an obvious danger that instead of a

united struggle against management, this could pit waiting and kitchen workers against each other.

Workers could be united by demands such as a £10 an hour minimum wage for all, and equal distribution of tips.

Strike ballot results of workers at TGI Friday’s in the Trafford Centre, Manchester and Haymarket in London Piccadilly were due on 11 May.

Ballots close at two sites in the Newcastle area and in Enfield on 18 May.

## ABORTION RIGHTS

# Pro-choice protest pans 'March for Life' bigots

**ABORTION RIGHTS** campaigners protested against a march by anti-choice bigots in central London last Saturday.

More than ten thousand anti-abortion protesters joined a national demonstration organised by "March for Life"—a group with roots in the US.

Its US sister organisation is against abortion, contraception and sex education, and is backed by president Donald Trump.

Over 100 people from the Abortion Rights campaign held a counter-protest.

They chanted "Pro-life, that's a lie—you don't care if women die" as the anti-choice march passed them into Parliament Square.

Protester Kass told Socialist Worker, "That organisation is hiding a misogynistic and moralistic view behind a purported pro-family, 'pro-life' stance."

She added that it is important to resist the constant attempts to roll back a woman's right to choose an abortion.

"We can't be complacent," she said.

"We have to listen to the stories of women in the 1960s who faced the trauma of backstreet abortions. If we're complacent, these people will take us back 50 years."



PART OF the Abortion Rights UK protest in Parliament Square

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Another protester, Rachel, pointed to the Conscientious Objection (Medical Activities Bill) currently going through the House of Lords.

This would allow any medical staff—including pharmaceutical and admin workers—to refuse to take part in any work that even

indirectly relates to an abortion. Currently the law allows just doctors and nurses to refuse to take part in abortion procedures.

Rachel said this would make it much harder for women to access abortions.

"For women living in remote rural areas, you may not get a choice," she said.

She added that the bill was "The 46th attempt to abolish the right to an abortion since the 1967 Abortion Act was passed 50 years ago".

Sofiya said that, if passed, the bill would be a major attack on a woman's right to choose.

"It's huge. It allows other people to make such a massive decision about your body," she said.

The protest was also joined by campaigners from Ireland.

They are part of a mass movement to repeal the 8th Amendment that outlaws abortion there.

A national referendum on repealing the Amendment is set to take place on Friday 25 May.

Annie Hoey from the Together for Yes campaign spoke to Socialist Worker. "There's a huge amount of momentum behind the yes campaign," she said.

"It's got support from so many people from all walks of life—all saying enough is enough."

● More information is available at the Abortion Rights website [abortionrights.org.uk](http://abortionrights.org.uk)

## JUSTICE CAMPAIGNS

### Crucial case of Sam Hallam back in court

SAM HALLAM, who was wrongly convicted of murder, has taken his claim for compensation for miscarriage of justice to the Supreme Court.

A teenager when he was sentenced to life in 2005 for a gang-related murder in north London, Sam always protested his innocence.

A powerful local campaign helped get his conviction quashed by the Court of Appeal in 2012.

Since then Sam has been denied compensation.

That's because under new rules someone has to prove that the basis of the quashing of the conviction "shows beyond reasonable doubt that the person did not commit the offence".

This requires Sam to establish his innocence once again. His case will be heard alongside that of Victor Nealon. Victor was released from a life sentence in 2013, after the discovery of DNA evidence pointing to another perpetrator.

Sam will attend the hearing with his mother Wendy Cohen. She campaigned for more than seven years for his release.

He will also be supported by two victims of previous high profile miscarriages, Paddy Hill of the Birmingham Six and Patrick Maguire of the Maguire Seven.

Hill said, "Under this appalling new test the Birmingham Six would have been denied compensation. We can't allow this young man to be treated in this way".

## WASTE WORKERS

### Money pours in to strike fund as waste workers begin second week of walkouts

**WASTE DISPOSAL** workers at the FCC plant in Hull began the second week of a two-week strike on Monday.

The Unison union members are fighting for equal sick pay for all workers.

Morale is high with a well organised picket line.

Strikers are determined not to let bosses break them.

There was a magnificent show of solidarity from another dispute across the road at the waste to energy works last week.

A worker at that site was sacked after raising health and safety issues and 15 other workers were also made redundant.

Some 40 waste to energy



Receiving donations for the hardship fund

workers marched over to the FCC picket line in solidarity and gave them £1,000 towards the FCC hardship fund.

Unite union offshore branch rep Paul Jukes also

brought a cheque for £1,000 to the picket line.

The FCC action looks like it could spread to the Driffild, Sutton and Burma Drive sites.  
**Eleanor Woyen**

## COMMUNICATION WORKERS

### Greedy Virgin Media sack 800 call centre workers

NEARLY 800 call centre workers are to be redundant after telecoms giant Virgin Media announced plans to close its office in Swansea.

Virgin Media has said the closure is down to its cost-cutting plans to "centralise" work in Manchester—meaning 772 jobs will go.

Bosses have apparently offered workers the opportunity to relocate.

But the CWU union, which organises call centre workers, says this is "disingenuous".

It pointed out that workers had been encouraged to relocate from Liverpool to Swansea in 2011, with the promise of "safe" jobs.

A video posted on the Wales Online news website



Branson is not returning calls

appeared to show a group of workers walking out of the meeting where they were told about the redundancies.

The CWU said a number people walked out throughout the day.

**Nick Clark**

## CAR COMPONENT WORKERS

### Strike ballot in Carlisle tyre factory

WORKERS AT Pirelli Tyres in Carlisle, Cumbria, are balloting for strikes and an overtime ban in a battle over pay and conditions.

The Unite union members include store workers, forklift drivers and process operators at the company.

They are fighting against low pay, the "deterioration of workers' terms and conditions" and a "culture of outsourcing" that leaves workers without employment protection.

The ballot for action closes on Tuesday 15 May with strikes planned for the end of May.

Pirelli supplies tyres to luxury brands such as BMW, Mercedes and Porsche.

## WORKERS SHOW POWER IN FRANCE

by CHARLIE KIMBER

**A WEEK of big marches and strikes in France ended on Sunday in Paris with 160,000 people joining a protest.**

It marked a year since Emmanuel Macron won the presidential election, a year which is ending amid continuing battles to block his neoliberal assault.

There were big protests by rail workers, students, teachers and school students on Thursday last week. Over 200,000 workers and students joined marches across France the previous Tuesday, May Day.

Attacks on a McDonald's and car dealership were used by Macron as an excuse to issue threats of a police crackdown on protesters.

Sunday's march was organised by left wing MP Francois Ruffin and other former members of the Nuit Debout (Night on our feet) movement of 2016.

It sought to be a focus for unity for all the union federations and political parties. It didn't wholly succeed, but the idea of going beyond



PART OF the demonstration in Paris last week

the very significant but fragmented resistance seen so far is attractive to many.

Rail workers continue their strikes for two days out of every five. They are battling attacks on their jobs, their rights at work, their pensions

and plans for privatisation and line closures.

"Not everybody strikes every day, but the general level of participation is still high," Robert, a rail worker in Marseille, told Socialist Worker.

"We are threatened with very serious attacks, so we can't compromise. It's been a long battle—we started on 3 April—but we have to keep going and be part of a wider social movement.

"We are making a particular

push to close as many lines as possible this coming Monday. And we'll be part of all the days of action. But we need a massive blow against Macron."

Air France workers ended four days of strikes this week

over pay. Civil service workers and many others in the public sector will strike and march on 22 May. And there is a follow-up to Sunday's mobilisation on 26 May.

Ruffin told the rally, "On 26 May we have the opportunity to bring together citizen movements, political movements and trade union movements.

"The goal is that in the same way that it overflows today in Paris, that tomorrow it overflows in Besancon, in Perpignan, that it overflows everywhere in the country."

The many different days of action are all important. But the reality is that Macron has not backed down.

He hopes the movement will grow weary and die down. His popularity is slumping—down now to 40 percent approval—but he can only be stopped by a movement that is both bigger and more radical.

The battle is far from over, but escalation is crucial.

### On other pages...

Where now for Labour after the local elections? >>> Page 7

### TUC DEMONSTRATION

## March against Tory austerity—then step up the pressure for more action

THOUSANDS OF trade unionists and campaigners are due to join a march in London this Saturday for workers' rights and against the Tories' brutal austerity policies.

It's called by the TUC trade union federation.

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has said he will be there and will address a rally in Hyde Park—as will the leaders of the CWU, Unite, Unison, GMB, FBU and other unions.

It's a protest over poverty wages, zero hours contracts, against attacks on public services and for a new deal for workers.

Further evidence of

the pain the Tories have presided over came on Monday. Some one million more children in working households are growing up in poverty than did so in 2010. The main reason is cuts to in-work benefits and public sector pay freezes.

A study by Landman Economics found that child poverty in working families will hit 3.1 million in the 2018-19 tax year. That's up almost 50 percent from 2.1 million when the Tory-Lib Dem coalition government came to office.

Families in which both parents work in



Unison union members on a TUC demonstration in Manchester, 2015

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

the public sector have been hit hardest. They have seen their average household income fall by £83 a week in real terms.

It's time to step up the battle against the Tories, and that means Saturday has to be a launchpad for strikes and further action. It can't be just a token protest.

One problem is that in recent weeks trade union leaders have encouraged millions of workers in local government and the NHS in England to accept pay deals below the rate of inflation.

March—then push to step up the action.